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64-hour work by March 15

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» **Revenue
loss in FY
2020 seen
at \$48.38M**

Citing an estimated \$48.38 million revenue loss in fiscal year 2020 from the adverse impact of the coronavirus outbreak and the residual effects of Super Typhoon Yutu, the Torres-Palacios administration announced Friday another round of austerity measures that will cut the regular 80 work hours of government employees to 64 hours, starting on March 15.

AUSTERITY MEASURES

- 4-day govt work
- Govt offices closed every Friday
- Hiring freeze
- Overtime restrictions
- Travel restrictions
- Fuel conservation

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said this coronavirus outbreak has essentially brought the CNMI's tourism industry to a standstill for an undetermined

period, causing a severe disruption in revenue and affecting many CNMI businesses and residents.

See 64-HOUR on Page 4

IPI cuts work hours effective today

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Citing the travel restrictions imposed by the Chinese government on their nationals in a bid to contain the coronavirus outbreak, Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC is re-

ducing work hours for its employees at the Imperial Palace Saipan effective today, Monday.

In response to *Saipan Tribune's* inquiry about work hours reduction, IPI said the travel restrictions to contain the virus outbreak in Wu-

See IPI on Page 4



'GIVE KIDS A SMILE'

Representatives and volunteers of the Saipan Seventh-Day Adventist Clinic help treat kids at the SDA Dentistry Clinic as part of the American Dental Association's Give Kids A Smile program event last Feb. 7.

NEIL FAMA

'Impending economic storm'

» **Finance chief
explains why
initial projected
decrease of
\$39.20M has
now jumped to
\$48.38M**

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig said the cancellation of flights from China, and now Korea, which are the top CNMI markets, prompted them to revise the annual revenue estimates for fis-



Atalig

cal year 2020 from an initial projected decrease in gross revenues of \$39.20 million to \$48.38 million decrease.

In a letter to Gov. Ralph DLG Torres last Thursday, Atalig disclosed that gross revenue estimates for the current fiscal year are now expected at \$184.83 million, which is a decrease of \$48.39 million from the \$233.22 million appropriated under Public Law 21-08, the budget law for fiscal

See STORM on Page 4

INSIDE



BUSINESS

All incoming travelers into Kiribati will be subjected to temperature check.

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ASIA

A soldier with a grudge gunned down 26 people and wounded 57 in Thailand.

PAGE 15



LIFE & STYLE

The 92nd annual Academy Awards will get underway today in Los Angeles.

PAGE 20



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MVA Tinian at 1.670.433.9365
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PROGRAM LINE UP

FEBRUARY 15		FEBRUARY 16	
2:00 PM	Judging of Booths	11:00 AM	Estofao Pika Cooking Contest
2:00 - 4:30 PM	Awards Presentation for 65K Pika Bike Race		E & J Band
5:00 - 5:30 PM	Opening Ceremony	12:00 PM	Costume Contest
5:30 - 5:40 PM	JROTC Presentation		Mr. Joe Sablan
5:40 - 6:00 PM	Hot Pepper Eating Contest (Female)		Olei's Band
6:00 - 6:15 PM	The Originals	2:45 - 3:15 PM	Marvin Guerrero/Jay Babauta
6:15 - 7:15 PM	Tunadas Singers	3:15 - 3:45 PM	Umang Race Boys & Girls
7:15 - 7:45 PM	Tao Tao Taga	3:45 - 4:15 PM	Tug of War
	Cultural Dancers	4:15 - 4:45 PM	Sack Race
7:45 - 8:00 PM	Smarty Swag Dancers		JC Pikalicious Burger Eating Contest
8:00 - 8:15 PM	Solo Performers: Jonilla Manuel/ Nikki Manglona & Letricia	4:45 - 5:00 PM	The Originals Dancers
8:15 - 8:45 PM	Fit Beat Dancers	5:00 - 5:15 PM	Solo Performers: Jonilla Manuel/Nikki Manglona, & Letricia
8:45 - 9:30 PM	Tubera Siblings	5:15 - 5:45 PM	Hot Pepper Eating Contest (Male)
9:30 - 10:00 PM	Olei's Band (Aldan Sisters)	5:45 - 6:15 PM	Tubera Siblings
10:00 - 10:30 PM	James Selepeo & JJ Concepcion	6:15 - 6:45 PM	Fit Beat Dancers
10:30 - 11:00 PM	Marvin & Jay	6:45 - 7:30 PM	SMADS
		7:30 - 7:45 PM	Smarty Swags
		7:45 - 8:45 PM	Olei's Band
		8:45 - 10:00 PM	Cha Cha Dance Competition (Marvin DL Guerrero)
		10:00 - 11:00 PM	James Selepeo & JJ Concepcion

Program line up is subject to change

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Local

Federal court to hear USA Fanter suit vs IPI

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The U.S. District Court for the NMI will hear the lawsuit that USA Fanter Corp. had filed against Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC and its application for a mechanic's lien this week.

District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona Manglona will hear on Feb. 12 two matters: USA Fanter's lawsuit for breach of contract and unjust enrichment against IPI, and its application for a mechanic's lien to determine whether there is probable cause for one.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, USA Fanter sued IPI last Jan. 30 for allegedly refusing to pay \$2,089,345 over landscaping improvements to IPI's hotel-casino project in Garapan.

USA Fanter wants IPI held liable to pay \$2.08 million in contract damages, and is also seeking payment for interest and attorney's fees.

It also asked the court to attach a mechanic's lien to

IPI's interests in the real property on the project. A mechanic's lien refers to a security interest in the title to property for the benefit of those who have supplied labor or materials that improve the property.

In the complaint that USA Fanter filed back in Jan. 30, the contractor terminated its contract with IPI on Jan. 28 and repeatedly demanded that IPI pay all amounts due and owing for work performed, but IPI failed to pay.

The complaint also stated that last Dec. 29, USA Fanter demanded to go into mediation with IPI on its claims, but IPI refused.

USA Fanter and IPI executed the contract for the project on June 18, 2019.

Also applying for a mechanic's lien against IPI is Pacific Rim Land Development LLC.

The federal court heard both party's arguments last week but Manglona opted to submit two certified questions to the CNMI Supreme Court this week.

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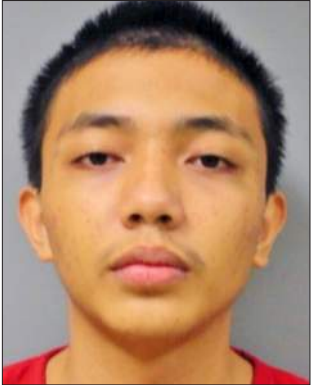
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Habitual offender wanted anew

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety is on the hunt for habitual offender Patrick Hernandez Muña for alleged theft.



Muna

Last Friday, Superior Court Associate Judge Theresa Kim-Tenorio issued an arrest warrant for Muna, 22, with bail set at \$25,000.

DPS is asking for the community's help in locating Muña, who is presumed armed with a handgun and ammunition that he stole from a home on Feb. 4.

Last Tuesday, DPS received a 911 call reporting a theft of a weapon and ammunition from a private residence. The caller stated that a handgun and ammunition were amongst other items taken from their home.

On Wednesday, at about 3:49am, police who were conducting routine patrol in Lower Mihaville saw a vehicle with no front license plates and no rear license plate lights. As officers activated their emergency lights, the vehicle took off along Chalan Pale Arnold Road and headed south and continued to drive recklessly in an attempt to lose the officers before crashing into a retaining wall near the Aging Center in Chinatown.

The suspect, later identified as Muña, got off the vehicle and fled on foot. Officers lost him in the chase.

Within the vehicle, police found an empty box of 20 count, .40 caliber ammunition, and single .40 caliber ammunition between the driver's seat and the driver's side door.

Officers also noticed a branch of a green leafy plant that was later positively identified as marijuana and multiple small ziplock bags containing a clear crystal-like substance. The substance later tested positive for methamphetamine.

A follow-up interview with the victims of the burglary confirmed that the ammunition and the other contents found inside the car were

items stolen from their home. Back in 2015, Muña was arrested for multiple thefts in business establishments and private home after Super Ty-

phoon Soudelor.

Muña was also arrested for the theft of a Federal Emergency Management Agency-owned generator that was

used to power water in Chalan Kanoa.

If Muña is spotted, police are advising individuals not to approach him and to dial 911

immediately as he is believed to be armed and dangerous. If you wish to remain anonymous, call the CNMI Crime Stoppers Hotline at 234-7272.

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Guam denies entry of potentially-infected vessel

Honoring its commitment to keep the people of Guam safe, the Leon Guerrero-Tenorio Administration denied a request Friday from the U.S. State Department to accept entry of a cruise line vessel whose passengers may be infected with the 2019 novel coronavirus.

The vessel in question is the MS *Westerdam*, a British-American private cruise vessel currently housing 1,455 guests as well as 802 crew

members. On Feb. 1, 2020, the vessel docked in Hong Kong and boarded approximately 800 passengers. The vessel sought entry at two other ports but was denied, given the potential risk of infection and the need for a large quarantine.

After consulting Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero, acting governor Joshua Tenorio denied the request of the State undersecretary to let the vessel land.

"While we feel for every soul on board the MS *Westerdam*, our obligation is to protect the people of Guam. Though Guam is prepared to deal with the potential implications of the coronavirus, few jurisdictions can screen, quarantine, or treat 1,400 patients at one time," said Leon Guerrero. "We respect that Guam has a duty to the nation we love, but that duty cannot jeopardize the health and safety of our people."



House Speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan) presides over a regular session Friday in the House of Representatives chamber at the Jesus P. Mafnas Memorial Building on Capital Hill. It was during the closing part of the session when Rep. Joel C. Camacho (R-Saipan) announced that Gov. Ralph DLG Torres had just sent a communication to Attao about the need to adjust/reduce by \$48.38 million the projected resources for fiscal year 2020.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

64-HOUR

From Page 1

"As a government, we have to adapt and make adjustments for this unforeseen circumstance," said Torres in a statement issued Friday.

The CNMI government had just lifted last December 2019—a little over a month ago—the austerity measures it implemented as a result of Super Typhoon Yutu, which hit the CNMI in the latter part of 2018.

Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios blamed the latest cost-cutting measure on factors outside of the CNMI's control.

"These are challenging times, but we understand that almost every economy in the Asia-Pacific region are experiencing revenue downturns," said Palacios in the statement.

As outlined in Directive 2020-002, business hours for departments and agencies under the Executive Branch will be closed during every Friday beginning March 20 until further notice.

In addition, there will also be hiring freezes, overtime and travel restrictions, fuel and utility conservation, and government procurement restrictions.

A source said all autonomous agencies may likely follow the administration's implementation of the 64-hour work schedule. The last time, when the Torres administration implemented austerity measures that included a 72-hour work schedule, only the Marianas Visitors Authority followed suit. The Commonwealth Ports Authority and the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. both opted not to implement the 72-hour schedule.

While the coronavirus has so far not entered the CNMI, press sec-

retary Kevin Bautista said the temporary suspensions of flights from China has led to a significant loss of economic activity and revenue.

Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig has already recommended to Torres to revise the annual revenue estimate for fiscal year 2020 by a reduction of 20.7% and budgetary resources by 28.3% for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Atalig said this reduces revenue estimates for fiscal year 2020 by \$48.39 million.

Bautista said both the Executive Branch and Legislature are working together to implement these reductions.

Bautista said the Office of Personnel Management and the Office of the Attorney General have been directed to work with all departments and agencies to ensure that all civil, excepted, and exempted service employees are properly notified and advised of the modified work schedule.

In order to keep essential public services like education and public safety intact, Torres said they had to lay all options on the table and determine the government's priorities.

Torres said they have had to make cuts of this size in order to protect the retirees' pensions, which provide for their basic needs.

"Since 2015, we have kept that commitment to ensure their full pensions, and we will continue to meet that as much as we can," the governor said.

Torres said while they understand that public health is at the top of their priorities, financial recovery is being done so that they can eventually revert back to a normal work schedule.

Torres said he and Palacios appreciate all government employees for

their patience during these financial challenges and for their continued commitment to serve the people of the Marianas.

Palacios noted that it is unfortunate that certain members of the community are spreading rumors of a cut to the retirees' pensions.

"Unfortunately, there are people out there that have been painting a picture that we made that decision. That's not the case," he said.

Palacios said they continue to be mindful to give retirees their full pensions but, that at the end of the day, they continue to look at the priorities with the limited resources that the CNMI now have as a result of the coronavirus outbreak.

Torres and Palacios said the Executive Branch, together with the Legislature, have determined a collective approach to addressing these challenges head-on, "because this is what a responsible government should do in challenging times."

They said they will continue to work to promote the Marianas as a world-class destination to the CNMI's other source markets and that economics and financial recovery are at the forefront of policy initiatives, so that the CNMI can return to normalcy.

A government employee said in an interview that the 64-hour work schedule is better than being furloughed.

The employee, who asked not to be identified, said they had been through that 16-hour cut during the administration of the late governor Eloy S. Inos in 2011.

It's just sad, she said, because she had just obtained a loan to fix her garage after the Federal Emergency Management Agency told her she's not qualified for benefits.

Based on information from counterparts at the Center for Disease Control and the U.S. State Department, the vessel has enough food and fuel to sustain itself.

"We have made clear that we will use every tool available to us to

protect our people and our border," said Tenorio.

To date, there are no confirmed cases of the coronavirus in Guam. The administration said it will inform the public as new information becomes available. (PR)

GCA student joins national honors group

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The National Society of High School Scholars, NSHSS, has invited a Grace Christian Academy student to join the organization for her superior academic achievements.

On Jan. 15, GCA's Yukianna M. Dela Cruz, daughter of Manases and Violeta Dela Cruz, was chosen to join the NSHSS, which boasts exclusive benefits for higher education and beyond to its over 1.5 million scholars from across the globe.

NSHSS founder and chairman Claes Nobel, a senior member of the family that established the Nobel Prizes, said he is honored to welcome Dela Cruz into their organization.

"On behalf of NSHSS, I am hon-

ored to recognize the hard work, sacrifice, and commitment that Dela Cruz has demonstrated to achieve this exceptional level of academic excellence. Dela Cruz is now a member of a unique community of scholars—a community that represents our very best hope for the future," he said.

NSHSS president James W. Lewis noted the organization's vision to provide a "lifetime membership to young scholars" to support their growth and development.

"We aim to help students like [Dela Cruz] build on their academic success by connecting them with unique learning experiences and resources to help prepare them for college and meaningful careers," he said.

Members of the NSHSS are automatically lifetime members.

IPI

From Page 1

han, China has impacted the flow of customers into the CNMI and has caused serious hardships to the local tourism industry.

IPI said it has assessed the steps the company must take to sustain its business and has made the difficult decision to temporarily reduce work hours effective today, Monday, until further notice.

IPI said the casino will continue to

operate 24 hours, 7 days a week.

The restaurant inside the casino, Chairman M, will open from 12pm to 2pm and from 6pm to 12am daily.

"We thank our employees and their families for their understanding and resilience," IPI said, adding that they believe at this time that this is the best way to protect the long-term interest of the business and preserve employment opportunities.

IPI did not mention how many work hours will be cut and how many employees are affected.

STORM

From Page 1

year 2020.

Atalig said earmarks of \$26.55 million, and debt service and Settlement Fund payment of \$51.58 million combine to reduce general fund resources by \$78.13 million.

Thus, he said, total resources available for appropriation—also called the annual operating budget—goes down 28.3% to \$106.70 million.

Atalig said that in his previous report last Monday, Feb. 3, they projected a decrease of \$39.20 million in gross revenue and a 25.3% decrease in the annual operating budget. He said this analysis factored a loss of the China market and some slight reductions on the neighboring countries.

After discussions with key stakeholders and in light of the recent coronavirus outbreak, it now appears that the impact on the tourism sector is greater than initial projections, he said.

"The increased cancellations on flights from China, and now Korea, which together make up more than a majority of our market, further distresses our revenue collections in the near and foreseeable future," Atalig said.

He said Finance will continue to impose strict cost containment initiatives while simultaneously looking to

implement mitigating programs and fiscal services.

Calling it an impending economic storm, the official said that Finance, together with the public and private leaders of the CNMI, and its people, will come together to face it.

In his Feb. 3 financial report to Torres, Atalig said fiscal year 2020 started the year with the continuing recovery of the CNMI economy, following the devastating effects of events beyond its control, which significantly affected major economic activities during the first quarter of fiscal year 2019.

He said per the 2020 Appropriations Act (P.L. 20-8), the annual revenue estimates are approximately \$233 million, with a first quarter revenue forecast of \$54,270,882.

Atalig said despite the relatively speedy recovery of essential services and major industries, revenue collections did not meet the first quarter projection; calculations of total revenue amounted to \$49,906,693.

He said the CNMI received less than forecasts of \$4,363,189 or 8%.

Atalig said the Business Gross Revenue Tax collected for the first quarter was shy of projections by \$356,922, which in total amounted to \$18,463,393.

Atalig noted that this projection does not include the BGRT collections from the exclusive gaming license of the Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC.

60 kids take part in SDA Clinic event

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

About 60 children received free oral health services, including dental exams, extractions, fillings, and fluoride treatment at the Saipan Seventh-Day Adventist Clinic last Feb. 7 as part of the American Dental Association's "Give Kids A Smile" annual event.

The 60 children who obtained free oral health services this year doubles the estimated 30 children who availed of the free services last year, according to SDA general dentist Steven Debulgado.

SDA helps celebrate this event once a year, which is typically the first Friday of February, as part of the nationwide Give Kids A Smile program, said Debulgado.

He emphasized the importance of this event, saying it's free for the youth and it's only one day of the year that is set aside for children, especially younger children who are more vulnerable to dental diseases, especially those who don't have access to Medicaid or insurance.

"It's always important that this vulnerable population, the kids, and especially those who don't have access to health care, to have this day set aside

just to help them," he said.

Besides Debulgado, various clinic staff and some high school volunteers participated in the event. According to Debulgado, some of the high school volunteers who have interests in a career in dentistry or anything medical-related shadowed and helped assist in sterilization, cleaning, breaking down the chairs, and other tasks that an assistant would do.

"It's important that we keep this career alive because people always get sick or they have some type of oral care that's needed," said Debulgado. "It's really good people get into this field to help people in the future."

Debulgado has been with SDA for two years.

"I wanted to do something in health care, but I didn't want to go into the hospital so with dentistry, it was very conducive and had a lot of hands-on stuff and I just fell in love with it and pursued it after," said Debulgado.

The American Dental Association launched the Give Kids A Smile program nationally in 2003. Since then, more than 5.5 million underserved children around the world have received free oral health service.

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Guerrero: DPS' silence on proposed bill is 'alarming'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Joseph "Lee Pan" T. Guerrero (R-Saipan) describes as "alarming" the Department of Public Safety's lack of comments on a public safety legislation that sets speed limits on secondary roads in the CNMI.

Responding to Rep. Joel C. Camacho (R-Saipan)'s comment that DPS did not provide his committee, the House Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations, any feedback on House Bill 21-46, Guerrero said Friday, "Some-

thing is wrong!"

H.B. 21-46, which was authored by Rep. Marco T. Peter (R-Saipan), wants to amend a Commonwealth Code to add a new subsection to establish a speed limit of 10 to 15 miles per hour for vehicles driving on non-primary, secondary roads in residential areas. The House passed the bill on a vote of 20-0; the bill now goes to the Senate.

During discussions on the bill, Guerrero said he does not



Guerrero

understand why DPS is reluctant when asked to comment on legislation, yet shows up with an "army" during budget deliberations.

The lawmaker said that when it is something about legislation involving the safety of the community, DPS personnel are not at the House or they

do not provide comments.

Guerrero noted that this is the second bill that DPS has not commented on.

"Is there a commissioner down there? Or on vacation or what?" the

lawmaker said, adding that somebody from DPS should at least attend the session and



Peter

make statements.

Guerrero said the Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations should force DPS to make public comments because it is not proper when they don't, considering that they are the responsible department to enforce the law. Speaker Blas Jonathan T.

Court grants preliminary examination for juveniles

The Superior Court granted Friday a preliminary hearing for two juveniles who were arrested for alleged burglary and theft despite having already been arraigned.

Superior Court Associate judge Joseph N. Camacho ordered that the two juveniles, although already charged with burglary, theft, and conspiracy to commit theft, are still entitled to a preliminary hearing or preliminary examination even though they already had an arraignment hearing.

Camacho has yet to set a preliminary hearing date for the juveniles.

A preliminary hearing or preliminary examination is usually conducted before an arraignment to weed out groundless claims and determine whether there is probable cause to prosecute a defendant. An arraignment, on the other hand, is where the complaint is read to the defendant stating the substance of the charges and allowing them to enter a plea of guilty or not guilty.

A preliminary examination hearing is held within 10 days after the initial appearance and before the arraignment hearing.

According to Camacho, although a preliminary exami-

nation is typically held before an arraignment, relevant statutes and rules are silent as to whether a defendant can have a preliminary examination after an arraignment.

Also, because the Commonwealth does not employ grand juries like federal courts, a preliminary hearing is the only judicial mechanism available to defendants in the Commonwealth to determine probable cause prior to trial.

According to court documents, the juveniles were arrested and detained on April 2, 2019.

The matter was set for a preliminary hearing on April 11,

Attao said he shares Guerrero's frustration.

Rep. Peter said he is happy with his colleagues' support of the bill and that it is primarily intended to protect people in villages. It also defines a secondary road, which he said is useful for contractors when they have a government project.

Rep. Luis John DLG. Castro (R-Saipan) said he supports the intent of the bill, noting some secondary roads are very narrow and many children play on such roads.

2019, but there was no time on the set date for a preliminary hearing.

Therefore, on April 11, the defense counsels, assistant public defender Heather Zona and Steven Pixley, and assistant attorney general Frances Demapan agreed that the juveniles could be arraigned on April 15, 2019, as scheduled.

The preliminary hearing was then pushed back to April 26, 2019, but the court was later concerned about whether the juvenile defendants are entitled to a preliminary hearing because the juveniles had already been arraigned. (**Kimberly A. Bautista**)

New Head Start officials are elected

The Head Start Parent Level Committee has elected a new batch of Head Start Policy Council members for the new school year.

Head Start/Early Head Start welcomed 12 new council members last weekend during the parent level committee turnover meeting at the Pacific Island Club Saipan.

The new council members are Jerika Laniyo, Rosemarie Skilling, Jacob Lizama, Ash-

ley Bornilla, Javie Decena, Jennilyn Cruz, Millianna Camacho, Vivian Hocog, Bijoy Krisno Kundu, Alexander Standish, Joseph Barcinas, and Gertrude Li.

According to Jolene Guerrero Sablan, family and community partnership manager, HPC members, along with parent representatives, and alternates are elected through the parent level committee each new school year, at the first Central

Parent Involvement Committee meetings by parents/guardians of enrolled children.

All parents/guardians with children enrolled in Head Start/Early Head Start are members of the CPIC.

Additional members of the HPC are community representatives who are elected by the new HPC, generally during their first meeting.

The program releases an announcement to advise the

public that the HPC is searching for community representatives. Through this announcement, HPC receives information from interested individuals who will be willing to serve.

HPC members serve a year-long term and elections are held each new school year. HPC members can only serve a maximum of five terms.

The HPC works closely with the program's management team and governing body to set the program's direction. (**Kimberly A. Bautista**)

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PUBLIC NOTICE

02/10/20

Notice for Public Comment Reprogramming of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds

Program Year/IDIS No.	Program:	Activity Name:	Subrecipient: Budget:	Approved Reprogramming Amount:	Proposed Revised Project Budget:	Proposed IDIS Funded Amount:	Current
2019/701	CDBG	Rehabilitation of the Tinian Gymnasium Basketball Court	Office of the Mayor of Tinian	\$86,250.00	(\$86,250.00)	\$0.00	\$86,250.00
2019/705	CDBG	Rehabilitation of the Rota Youth Center	CNMI Department of Community and Cultural Affairs	\$200,000.00	(\$200,000.00)	\$0.00	\$200,000.00
2019/706	CDBG	Rehabilitation of the Sinapalo Children's Park Roof	CNMI Office of Grants Management	\$284,910.80	(\$284,910.80)	\$0.00	\$284,910.80
		Total Reprogrammed from Activities:			(\$571,160.80)		
NEW	CDBG	Purchase and Installation of Modular/Pre-fabricated Units for Transitional Housing (Saipan)	Northern Marianas Housing Corporation	\$0.00	\$571,160.80	\$571,160.80	\$0.00
		Total Reprogrammed to Activities:			\$571,160.80		

Our agency through its Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) that we publish a "Public Notice" on reprogramming of funds over \$50,001.00. Therefore, comments from the general public should be submitted to NMHC Central office located in Garapan, Saipan on or before March 11, 2020, no later than 4:30 p.m. You may contact Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer at (670)234-6866/9447.

/s/ **Jesse S. Palacios**
Corporate Director



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INVITATION FOR BID

(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)

BID SUBMISSION DATE: Friday, February 28, 2020
TIME: 11:00 AM

NMHC IFB 2020-002

Purchase of Equipment for Fire Truck

Project package will be available on February 03, 2020, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays.

The provisions of the CNMI Procurement regulations, NMIAC 70-30.3-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A **Mandatory Pre-Bid conference** will be held at **10:00 a.m.** on February 12, 2020, at the NMHC Central Office Conference Room located in Garapan. Failure to attend the Mandatory pre-bid conference will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager/Procurement Officer, at (670) 234-6866/9447 or email at officemanager@nmhc.gov.net during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ **Vinney Atalig-Hocog**
Chairman
NMHC Board of Directors

/s/ **Francisco C. Aguan**
Acting Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

A public hearing on two animal cruelty bills is scheduled for today, Feb. 10, at 5pm at the Guam Legislature.

Bill 185-35, also known as the Protecting Animal Welfare and Safety Act, is a sweeping overhaul of Guam's animal

cruelty statutes. It clarifies different forms of abuse, improves the methods of seizing abused animals and ensuring for their care, and provides for education, therapy and treatment to aid in rehabilitating offenders.

WSRES names STEM Fair and Paper Plane competition winners, judges

William S. Reyes Elementary School held its Schoolwide Annual STEM Fair on Jan 29-31, 2020 at the school cafeteria. A total of 28 projects in the General Sciences Category were eligible to participate in schoolwide competition. Congratulations to the Kingfisher STEM Fair winners:

AM Session (Kindergarten – 2nd Grade Category):

■ 1st Place: Blow Up Balloon by Keziah Mallari, 2nd Grade

■ 2nd Place: Homemade Hovercraft by Aldric Antonio, 2nd Grade

■ 3rd Place: Lava in a Cup by Marq Hernandez, 2nd Grade

PM Session (3rd Grade – 4th Grade Category):

■ 1st Place: Little CO2 Bubbles by Ulrich Servito, 4th Grade

■ 2nd Place: Is Bigger Better? By Evan Cabrera, 4th Grade

■ 3rd Place: DIY Solar Oven by Alyana Rotap, 5th Grade

WSRES also launched its first Paper Airplane Competition. Students competed with their classmates and a classroom winner competed against students in the 2nd through 5th

grades. Students used a single piece paper to design by creating a blueprint and folding it to make their paper airplanes. The paper airplane that traveled the farthest will represent WSRES in the islandwide competition. Congratulations to the Paper Airplane Competition Winners:

■ 1st Place: Angelo Nabanuag, 5th Grade

■ 2nd Place: Daniel Leemarvin, 4th Grade

■ 3rd Place: Leelan Litulumar, 4th Grade

WSRES will be sending Mallari, Antonio, Servito, Cabrera, and Rotap to the Islandwide STEM Fair Competition, along with Nabanuag, to compete in the Islandwide Paper Airplane Competition in March.

The school sends also sends its appreciation to community partners for interviewing the students and judging the projects: Rebecca Flores (school counselor), Emma Iriarte (BECQ), Viktoria Buniag (NMC CREES), Iian Bubb (BECQ), Rep. Christina Sablan, Marji Tarope (NMC), Denise Perez (CRM), and SSG Michael Ryan (Army recruiter). (PR)

MYPros membership meeting today

The MYPros board of directors will host its first general membership meeting of 2020 today, Monday, Feb. 10, from 11:30am to 12:30pm at the Azucena Room of Fiesta Re-

sort & Spa Saipan.

Keynote speaker for this event will be TanHoldings president Jerry Tan. There will also be a presentation on the Pacific Century Fellows. (PR)

Guam Legislature to hear anti-animal cruelty bills today

The bill does not ban cock-fighting, which was banned by a federal law adopted in December of 2018.

Bill 77-35, also known as the Law Enforcement Protection Act of 2019, adds increased penalties for anyone who harms or attempts to harm a law enforcement dog.

"We're seeing more and more cases of animal cruelty. It's time to strengthen our laws and fix this growing problem," said GAIN board president Cyrus Luhr. "This is an opportunity for the public to share their thoughts on the state of animal cruelty on Guam."

If adopted, the PAWS Act

will also be called "Pugua's Law," in memory of Pugua, a Jack Russell terrier boonie mix, who was found shot dead in the carport of a family's Yigo home on Sept. 27, 2018. The alleged shooter was arrested, and the case is currently ongoing.

The public hearing is being overseen by Sen. Therese Ter-

lajé, who chairs the Committee on Health, Tourism, His-

toric Preservation, Land and Justice. Testimonies may be sent to her office at senatorterlajeguam@gmail.com. (PR)

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Create your "Dream Car"

REQUIREMENTS

- Use any standard drawing medium (coloring pencils, crayons, paints or markers).
- Paper Size: 11"(h) x 17"(w).
- The color, material, and shape of paper can be chosen freely.
- Artwork with a thickness of over 5mm will be disqualified.
- Collage or cutout pictures will be allowed for plain drawings, excluding ones making other artworks dirty or requiring special care in handling.
- Unacceptable pieces:
 - CG artwork created on a computer or similar device will not be accepted.
 - Collaborative artwork drawn by multiple individuals will also not be accepted.
 - From a copyright perspective, simulant artworks / trademarked characters will also not be accepted.

ENTRY PERIOD

Deadline February, 28, 2020

CONTEST THEME

Your Dream Car

AGE CATEGORIES

Under 8 years old
8 - 11 years old
12 - 15 years old

INQUIRIES

Atkins Kroll
Administration Office of Toyota Dream Car Art Contest
Phone number: (671) 648-8415
E-mail address: athena.amos@akguam.com

LOCAL CONTEST

- Submissions will be accepted no later than February 28, 2020 at:
AK Toyota
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Saipan, MP 96950
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WEBSITE

For more information, scan to log onto
www.AKsaipan.com/dreamcar



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'2019-nCoV vaccine could take years, not weeks'

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

As China struggles to contain the novel coronavirus outbreak, developing a vaccine against the disease is considered still months, if not years, away.

In ordinary conversations, people are asking questions like, "Why don't they simply develop a vaccine?" or "How can we keep ourselves safe if the virus spreads so easily from one human to the next?"

When asked about this, Commonwealth Health Care Corp. spokesperson Zoe Travis underscored the difficulty of developing a vaccine for the newly known virus, which first appeared in Wuhan, China, saying, "A vaccine for the novel corona-

virus could take months or years, not weeks or days."

Developing a vaccine for the novel coronavirus, or any vaccine for that matter, takes several steps. Travis said there are many stages that come into play before the vaccine is made, such as being able to get it to a dosage that would be safe for everyone, depending on the overall outcome of what the virus could turn out to be.

"We're still learning how infectious it could be getting it from someone and what the variations of symptoms are. Everything is still unknown because it's still so new," said Travis.

Despite that, the corporation is prepared to help treat someone who is infected by the virus, she said, adding that

the Commonwealth Health Center, which CHCC runs, has several isolation rooms called negative pressure isolation rooms to keep patients in, where nothing can get in or out, that they have prepared staff working with the Saipan

airport to identify passengers and have already established protocols to get them to the hospital and then isolate them.

"So far, all we know is that the coronavirus causes respiratory illness such as a fever, cough, and difficulty breath-

ing," said Travis.

If you have any symptom, even if you know that it's not coronavirus and not sure what it is, it is still advised that you wear a face mask and not neglect other important things you can do, such as washing your hands for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sani-

tizer, avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands, avoiding close contact with people who are sick, staying home when you are sick, covering your cough/sneeze with a tissue and properly disposing of it, and cleaning and disinfecting touched objects and surfaces frequently.

Tiona Jones becomes 1st sergeant

The family and friends of Master Sgt. Tiona R. Jones are a very proud bunch after she recently graduated from 1st Sergeant's School.

The daughter of Richard Dela Cruz Farrell and Celina Castro Farrell, Jones enlisted in the Air Force shortly after graduating from Tinian High School in September 2006, with a promise to her parents to earn her college

degree through the Air Force.

Jones, or "Tio" as she is known by family and friends, fulfilled her promise in 2018, when she earned a bachelor's degree at the American Military University, West Viginian, with a degree in Hospitality Management.



Jones

Along the way, Jones deployed in support of operations Iraqi Freedom, Inherent Resolve, and Enduring Freedom. She has performed duties as an international zone policeman in Baghdad, Iraq, and a patrolman at Contingency Operating Base Speicher,

Iraq. She was also a flight chief for one of the largest security forces units within the area of responsibility in Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar, where she managed over 140 total force airmen.

Jones is currently assigned to the 14th Medical Group, as the first sergeant at Columbus AFB, Mississippi. In this capacity, she advises the commander on the readiness, health, morale, and welfare of 167 personnel. (PR)

Henk Rogers to headline UOG sustainability conference

One of the world's leading advocates and activists for reducing, and eventually eliminating, humankind's dependence on fossil fuel, Henk B. Rogers, will be the keynote speaker at the upcoming 11th University of Guam Conference on Island Sustainability to be held from March 31 to April 3 at the Hyatt Regency Guam.

"With the recent passage of Public Law 35-46 committing Guam to 100% renewable energy production by 2045, it

couldn't be more timely to have Mr. Henk Rogers inspire and share his insights with our island as well as our guests from fellow islands working toward similar policies," said Austin J. Shelton, director of the UOG Center for Island Sustainability.

Rogers is the founder, visionary, and chairman of the board at Blue Planet Foundation, which has helped pave the way for Hawaii to enact a policy that calls for electric utilities throughout the state to rely on 100% renewable energy by 2045.

He is the founder and CEO of Blue Planet Energy, one of the leading providers of energy storage systems (i.e. batteries) that power homes, businesses, and utility grids. The company's technology is advancing the safety, reliability, and energy output of bat-

tery systems.

Rogers is also the founder and president of Blue Planet Research, a private research laboratory that has designed and built off-grid renewable energy infrastructures, Blue Ion energy storage systems, HI-SEAS Mars/Moon habitats, and hydrogen production systems.

He is now focusing beyond Hawaii to help others enact mandates for 100% renewable energy in their regions. He has spoken at three Inter-Parliamentary Union assemblies, where he collaborated with the 178-member countries to draft an emergency climate change resolution.

His newest initiative, Blue Planet Alliance, takes a "mandate first" approach to initiate global climate change action.



Rogers

The alliance aims to create measurable and scalable results among individuals, organizations, cities, states, countries, and—eventually—the world.

Prior to focusing on environmental protection, Rogers was a pioneer in Japan's fledgling computer game industry and developed the Black Onyx, the first role-playing game in Japan. He is perhaps best known to mainstream video-game enthusiasts as the founder and CEO of Blue Planet Software, which manages the worldwide rights to Tetris, one of the most popular video games in history.

To register for the 11th Conference on Island Sustainability, visit <https://www.uog.edu/cis2020/>. (PR)

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
ADDENDUM
RFP20-CHCC/RESPIRATORY CARE-001A
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: February 11, 2020 TIME: 10:00 AM
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INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE (WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP). ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **RFP's** TAB ON THE BOTTOM NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORAZON P. ADA
CHCC DIRECTOR OF P&S

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-20-009

WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), Office of the Executive Director, is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified insurance firms to provide workers' compensation insurance and administration for CUC's employees throughout the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and when on official business away from the CNMI.

The RFP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 for one RFP package set.

One (1) Original and Six (6) Hard Copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RFP-20-009, Workers' Compensation & Administration"**, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than February 14, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. (ChST)**. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered. Proposals mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from the proposal submitted by competing proposers.

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposer due to lack of information or understanding of the RFP requirements in the course of proposer's preparation of the RFP under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the RFP under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Proposers are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RFP and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 31, 2020** to **Manny B. Sablan**, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to **Vivian Santos**, CUC Human Resource Manager, via email vivian.santos@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said RFP, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLON
Purchasing Administrator

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP NO.: DPW20-RFP-002
SUBMISSION DATE: February 27, 2020 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"DPW Redemption Pilot Program Implementation, Saipan"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A PRE-PROPOSAL Conference is scheduled for **February 14, 2020 AT 9:00 A.M., LOCAL TIME** at the Department of Public Works, Conference Room Solid Waste Transfer Station, Lower Base.

QUESTIONS MUST BE MADE IN WRITING TO Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS February 21, 2020**. THESE QUESTIONS WILL BE ANSWERED WITHIN THREE (3) BUSINESS DAYS AND WILL BE SHARED WITH ALL PROPOSERS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ JAMES A. ADA
SECRETARY OF PUBLIC WORKS

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

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PUBLIC NOTICE
REGULAR MEETING
 Wednesday, February 19, 2020, 11:00 a.m.
 Pacific Islands Club
 Annex, Magellan
 San Antonio, Saipan

Agenda

1. **Preliminary Matters**
 - a. Call to Order and Roll Call
 - b. Proof of Notice of Meeting
 - c. Review and Approval of Minutes of July 08, 2019 Meeting
2. **Reports of the Executive Director and Committees**
 - a. Office & Staff Update
 - b. Publications – Print & Website: Status, Issues, & Plans
 - i. NMI Reporter
 - ii. CMC
 - iii. NMIAC
 - iv. Driver's Handbook
 - v. Miscellaneous Projects
 - c. FY 2020 and FY 2021 Budget & Expenditures
 - d. Sales and Other Reports
3. **Unfinished Business**
4. **New Business**
5. **Public Comment**
6. **Place and Date of Next Meeting; and Adjournment**
7. **Other Matters**

Hyatt to host sumo wrestling event

Hyatt Regency Saipan will be hosting a sumo wrestling event on Saturday, Feb. 15, as part of its celebration for its upcoming 40th anniversary in the CNMI. The event will be exclusive to select Saipan students.

On Feb. 15, at 12pm, Hyatt Regency Saipan will turn its beach side into a *dohyu*, the ring where sumo wrestling bouts are held, similar to what Hyatt did back in 2015, during a sumo wrestler's visit. This time, this year's visiting sumo wrestlers and the ancient art of sumo wrestling will be introduced to select CNMI Public

School System students.

Sponsored and guided by Hitoshi Nakauchi, president of Saipan Portopia Hotel Corp. and owner of Hyatt Regency Saipan, he said he wants to share with 200 Public School System students and a parent the sport of sumo wrestling, Japan's traditional sport.

"It is difficult to organize and sponsor any private sumo wrestler appearances, and have them travel outside of Japan," said Hyatt Regency Saipan general manager Nick Nishikawa, "and we are very lucky and honored to have the hotel owner bring

this event to Saipan."

Alongside the fun event of meeting the visiting sumo wrestlers, Hyatt Regency Saipan will be serving *Chanko nabe*, the staple food of sumo wrestlers for lunch. It is a hot pot dish that comes in many varieties and contains vegetables, seafood and meat.

There are only 200 spaces available. These have been provided to the CNMI Public School System who will distribute to selected students. (PR)

Cabrera lands on Hollins dean's list

ROANOKE, Va.—Saipan native Gedin Auria Cabrera, a sophomore psychology major at Hollins University, has been named to the dean's list for the 2019 fall semester. To attain this distinction, students must earn at least a 3.5 average on a 4.0 grading scale.

Cabrera is the daughter of Steven and Geraldine Cabrera of the Northern Mariana Islands. She is a graduate of Kagman High School.

Hollins is an independent liberal arts university offering undergraduate education to women, selected graduate programs for men and women, and community outreach initiatives. (PR)

Korean drama picks Marianas as awards destination

To celebrate its great ratings, the popular Korean TV drama *Stove League* has chosen to celebrate with a rewards vacation to the Marianas.

All cast and crew of the show will travel to Saipan on Feb. 17, 2020, for four days of vacation and off-season training. The first episode of the show aired on Dec. 19, 2019, scoring a 5.5% viewership rating. Ratings jumped to 16% for the show's 13th episode on Feb. 1, 2020.

"We're very excited that *Stove League* has chosen the Marianas as their destination

to celebrate their unrivaled popularity and double-digit viewership rating in Korea," said Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo. "We look forward to welcoming them to our beautiful tropical islands for some well-earned rest and rejuvenation."

Stove League deals with the winds of change as a floundering baseball team that even fans have given up on scouts for a new captain. The 16-episode drama has quickly gained popularity for its signature story-telling and sophisticated details. (PR)



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Opinion

Hafa Adair

Saipan Tribune

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MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Could United States have moved faster on coronavirus response?

As the world grapples to contain a troubling new strain of the coronavirus, an early criticism of the U.S. response has come from an influential critic: Dr. Scott Gottlieb, the former head of the Food and Drug Administration.

Gottlieb is alarmed that this country's capacity to test for the pathogen is lagging as the outbreak spreads from China to 27 other countries. It is imperative that Congress and the Trump administration act on his concerns to ensure the nation has the readiness and resources to contain this new public health threat.

In a long Twitter thread posted Feb. 2, Gottlieb said swifter, broader screening is needed nationally to detect coronavirus, which has sickened more than 28,000 people in China. The Catch-22, as Gottlieb called it, is that so far, only the U.S. Centers for Disease Control has been able to run the tests for this virus, creating a bottleneck. For testing to occur elsewhere, leaders of two key federal agencies must sign off to allow the CDC to share technology.

There's generally a two-part process during outbreaks. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services first has to determine whether there's a public health emergency or "significant potential" for one. Once that decision is made, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration can issue an emergency authorization allowing testing beyond the CDC. The Department of Health and Human Services finally declared the public health emergency on Jan. 31—a full month after the outbreak was reported in Wuhan, China.

To their credit, the FDA and the CDC were ready to go. The FDA issued its emergency use authorization on Tuesday. On Thursday, the CDC announced it had begun shipping test kits to "qualified U.S. and international laboratories." The CDC had also taken previous steps to share information to help commercial firms develop tests. That could expand testing more broadly, potentially allowing hospitals to run them. Clearly, these two agencies grasped the urgency. Gottlieb commended their preparation on Thursday, but he has also raised concerns about removing additional bureaucratic hurdles that could prevent testing at hospitals.

An official with the Association of Public Health Laboratories said expanding testing capabilities sooner is always better during an outbreak. The organization's members had been "anxiously awaiting the declaration, which allows the deployment of test kits" under the FDA's emergency authorization, said Kelly Wroblewski, the association's director of infectious disease programs.

Questions are merited about how long it took HHS to set the process in motion. During a previous outbreak of another coronavirus, one called MERS, HHS had made this

See **COULD** on Next Page

Everyone will be forgotten. But maybe not what they've done

A few days ago a former colleague texted me from a Chicago coffeehouse to say she was sitting near an elderly, disheveled man she initially thought might be homeless. She'd studied him for a few moments before a shocking truth hit her.

He was a former Chicago alderman, once powerful and feared, the stuff of daily news, a legend in his not-so-distant time.

But no, she thought. Could this really be him?

"Is he still alive?" she asked in her text.

I Googled and confirmed that he was indeed still alive, but by the time I texted her back she had already concluded that she was right about his identity, though he probably wasn't homeless.

A day or two later—hang on, I'll connect these dots in a minute—I was watching "PBS NewsHour" on YouTube. When the show was over, YouTube automatically bounced to an old episode of "The Daily Show With Trevor Noah." Noah made jokes about several previously major news events, all of which I only dimly remembered. Then he went into a riff on Kirstjen Nielsen.

"Kirstjen Nielsen?" I thought. Wow. Hadn't thought about her in forever.

Forever—or so I deduced from again consulting Google—meant since last April, which was when she resigned as the country's controversial secretary of homeland security. It was weird to realize how quickly she had faded from memory.

And what, you may be wondering, does she have to do with that alderman?

I'm not going to name the once-famous alderman because it doesn't seem fair, and even if I did, his name wouldn't mean anything to a lot of people now. And that's the point of these two anecdotes, a point summed up by a friend who in an entirely different context said something afterward that snapped the two together in my mind.

"Everyone," he said, "is forgotten."

Everyone is forgotten. So is most of what happens. The daily urgencies, private and public, fade. Fame is fleeting. Power shifts. Even the mighty fall.

Kirk Douglas? He just died at the age of 103. "He's still alive?" some older people have said. Younger ones, meanwhile, have said, "Who?"

The obituaries remind us that in his heyday Douglas was the greatest movie star alive and remains one of the greatest of all time. But his time, our time, will one day be as blurry in the collective memory as 4000 B.C. is to us.

By **MARY SCHMICH**
Chicago Tribune

Mary Schmich (mschmich@chicagotribune.com, Twitter @MarySchmich) is a columnist for the Chicago Tribune and winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for commentary.



It can be depressing and destabilizing to acknowledge the fleeting nature of, well, almost everything. It can also be exciting and motivating. Either way, the recognition is existential, in the true sense of the word.

"The fact that humans are conscious of their mortality, and must make decisions about their life is what existentialism is all about," says Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia which, rest assured, will one day be forgotten.

We're living in an acutely existential moment. That could be said of every era and probably has been. But in this moment we're summoned each day, loudly and publicly, to reckon with right and wrong in our country and our world, to make decisions that we know will shape the future even if the details of those decisions vanish through time.

How tempting it can be to think: But if everything is forgotten, if each of us will be forgotten, none of it matters.

On Wednesday, U.S. Sen. Mitt Romney gave us an example of why we shouldn't think that way.

He stood on the U.S. Senate floor and gave a speech explaining why he, alone among Republican senators, would vote to convict President Donald J. Trump in the president's impeachment trial. He spoke of faith and conscience. And of the future.

"Future generations of Americans who look at the record of this trial will note merely that I was among the senators who determined that what the president did was wrong, grievously wrong," he said. "We are all footnotes at best in the annals of history."

Footnotes at best. Most of us won't even be that.

And yet we're all given the chance, every day, to plant the seeds that will make the future a better place. And even if that future world doesn't have a clue who we are? What comes from those seeds is how we'll be remembered.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Coronavirus death of Chinese whistleblower doctor should sober Beijing—and us

The death of a young Chinese doctor who was silenced by authorities when he tried to warn about the outbreak of the coronavirus has lit up the country's social media with outrage.

By Friday, references to the death of whistleblower Li Wenliang from the virus had been viewed 270 million times on Weibo, one of the biggest social media platforms in China. The public is so angry that Chinese censors haven't yet shut the topic down.

This 34-year-old ophthalmologist from Wuhan, who left be-

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Critical thinking

In the immediate aftermath of the FBI executing the issuance of federal search warrants on Gov. Torres and his cohorts, the community was in shocked disbelief that such a situation would befall upon the governor of our simple islands holding the highest office of trust and honor.

It is very questionable when Gov. Torres publicly proclaimed that he had done "nothing wrong," that he would "let the legal process take its course," and that he is "fully cooperating with law enforcement officials."

Claiming that he has done nothing wrong, why then would the U.S. Department of Justice spend thousands of dollars to fly all these agents of the FBI from off-island to initiate these costly investigations?

And why was his cell phone confiscated? Furthermore, why would the federal judge, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona Manglona, sign off on the subpoenas and warrants issued if there is no probable cause that a crime has been committed? It doesn't seem likely or even plausible.

The public announcement from the chairman of the Republican Party was very disturbing, stating that the investigations being conducted by the FBI of Gov. Torres was nothing more but hot air and lies, baldly asserting that the governor has been unfairly accused of improprieties perpetrated by the minority members of the Legislature who were desperately trying to impeach him and remove him from office.

This gaslighting, psychological mumbo-jumbo, hocus pocus mind games are designed to bewilder and befuddle the people, as in the movie *Gaslight*, where the abusive and manipulative husband worked to convince his wife she was losing her mind by lowering the lights and pretending everything was normal.

The GOP chairman's statement implies that Gov. Torres' political detractors are concocting a misinformation campaign simply for political vindictiveness. Nothing could be further from the truth. Sadly and, unfortunately, the Republican Party chairman will, by hiding the truth, bring down the people of the Commonwealth, and we will be forever known as corrupted.

Central Executive Committee

NMI Democratic Party

COULD

From Page 10

critical declaration before a case occurred in the U.S. The agency can act when there's a significant potential for a public health crisis. The agency would not provide an answer when an editorial writer asked why it still took a month for it to act.

On Thursday, an HHS spokesman noted that it took MERS much longer to reach the U.S. than the new coronavirus, "so we had plenty of time to develop a test before the virus got here." The spokesman referred other questions to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, headed by Seema Verma, who has been dogged by questions about using taxpayer dollars to hire image consultants.

Tensions between Verma and HHS Sec. Alex Azar have repeatedly made headlines, raising serious questions about how well the agency is running. Verma's communications staff did not respond to an editorial's writer's questions about the declaration's timing, but transparency is imperative as the outbreak continues. Congress should follow up.

(c)2020 Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

hind a young child and pregnant wife, has become the face of the epidemic, and of Beijing's blunders.

Back in December, he posted his concerns about a contagious new virus that resembled SARS, the lethal coronavirus that spread to 29 countries in 2003. He was arrested, jailed and made to recant. Now he has become a martyr for millions of Chinese.

But his death is far more than a poignant tragedy. It is an indictment of China's tightly controlled top-down system that silences civil society and independent media. Had his warnings been heeded in December, this outbreak might never have exploded into a global health emergency.

And Li's bravery—along with the outrage of millions of Chinese—is a reminder that, whatever the tensions between China and the United States, the Chinese people are as much a victim of their government's failure as the still small number who have been infected globally.

We should all mourn Li Wenliang. And so should Xi Jinping's government in Beijing.

But of course it will not.

"There is a strong parallel between the response and cover-up to SARS and this current outbreak," I was told by the Council on Foreign Relations' Yanzhong Huang, a global health expert specializing in China. Although the first case was apparently detected on Dec. 12, local officials hid the statistics for weeks, fearful of falling afoul of Communist Party higher-ups by reporting anything that undermined "stability."

"This is exactly why Dr. Li has become the subject of national grief," Huang continued. "He was a whistleblower, who gathered information. It would have been a different story if they listened to him. There is a strong incentive at the local level to silence dissenting voices."

We have seen the results. Yes, Xi Jinping's authoritarian rule does well at top-down physical commands -- building new hospitals in Wuhan in 10 days and quarantining the entire city. But the crackdown on nongovernmental organizations in the health field (and beyond) and muzzling of independent media cut the central government off from vitally needed information.

"The lessons of SARS haven't been learned, in terms of information transparency," says sociologist Anthony Spire, a China expert at the University of Melbourne. "Without civil society input and a freer press that could raise red flags, the government is disadvantaged in reporting outbreaks. They should know that."

What's so disturbing is that many Chinese officials do know that, but it doesn't seem to make a difference. In 2010, I interviewed then-Chinese Health Minister Chen Zhu in Beijing along



This Feb. 3, 2020 photo and released by Beijing Thanksgiving Public Welfare Foundation, shows Dr. Li Wenliang at The Central Hospital of Wuhan in Wuhan in central China's Hubei province.

By TRUDY RUBIN

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer. Readers may write to her at: Philadelphia Inquirer, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at trubin@phillynews.com.



with a small group of U.S. journalists. "SARS has taught us a very good lesson," he said. "Now we emphasize information transparency and immediate disclosure."

"We are establishing a system that allows the grassroots to respond directly to the Ministry of Health," he went on. "NGOs have an indispensable role in health care, in particular in the prevention of diseases."

I don't know whether Chen ever followed through on those plans. However, under Xi Jinping, top-down controls have become even tighter. "One clear target of Xi's groups to silence," says Sophie Richardson, China director of Human Rights Watch, "are domestic NGOs in the health field that provide services and information to the public or help respond to medical crises."

So the question at hand is whether the Beijing government will learn anything from the current crisis about the need for bottom-up information from civil society. So far it looks unlikely.

"We have declared a people's war against the epidemic," Xi told President Donald Trump by phone. The phrase people's war means top-down control and ignoring the grassroots.

This is a self-defeating strategy for China. Beijing's proven inability to prevent epidemics will only embolden those U.S. officials with an

unrealistic view of how far America's economy and society can be "decoupled" from China.

Beijing's initial mishandling of the outbreak is also triggering a fear factor that feeds xenophobia. Fortunately, the evidence so far indicates that the current coronavirus epidemic is much less lethal than SARS and limited globally.

But hats off to Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney for visiting the city's Chinatown and pushing back against coronavirus hysteria. Any attacks against Chinese nationals or Asian Americans, or gleeful celebration of the epidemic's impact on China's economy (as in Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross' comment that it may bring jobs back to America), are sickening.

We should all take a moment to pay our respects to Li Wenliang, who reminded us that China is made up of individuals, some heroic, many seeking to make their society more transparent, and millions now suffering from their government's failure. The problem lies with Beijing.

T.O.A.S.T.: Tinian Officially A Super Time

Tinian Pika Festival Daze

Two weeks before Pika Fest I have to cut and chop plenty tangan tangan trees to roast plenty lechon babuis a few days before Pika Fest I have to pumupeska para bai bula ayuyu the first day of Pika Fest who did I see old Tinian maestro, poet Joey Connolly that night who was looking at the moon out on the cliffs? It was Pepe Batbon next night si Pepe got todudo bulacho driven home by his kutzu Joe Camacho at the gayera he bet on the 'side short' and won forty dollars I'm happy to report Hatch vs. Perkins my guess at Tinian Pika Fest.

"I loved to trudge the windswept ridge... I walked in simple solitude: unknown I lived my fill."
—J.C.L. Mellersh, on the Cotswald Hills, England, 1933.

At Tinian's Southern Cliffs

Alone I sit under the Milky Way
Where Tinian's southern cliffs meet the sky
Alone I gaze at stars far away

LITERARY NOOK**By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

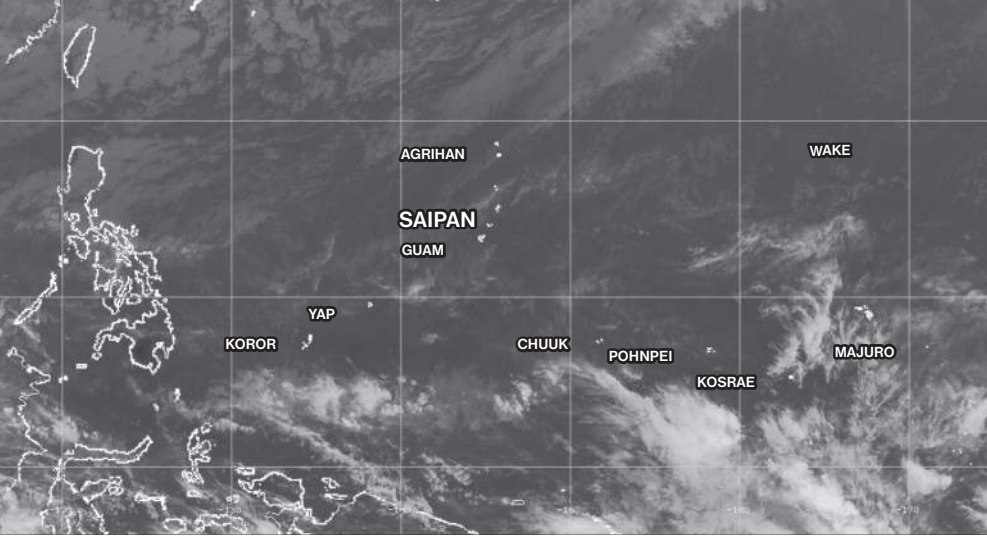
Joey aka Pepe Batbon is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.



Jets and satellites pass me by
I love to walk along the cliff road
And watch the moon and planets rise
Hearing waves break on rocks and explode
As darkness comes and stars fill the skies
The Teakettle pours out its Milky Way stream
'Cats Eyes' gleam at the end of the Fish hook
Planets Jupiter and Saturn light up the ocean scene
Orion shoots meteor showers and I get a quick look
Oh that I might go tonight again and walk
Where Tinian's southern cliffs meet the sky
The Milky Way messages in celestial chalk
Remind me of the years remaining before I die.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY	
Partly sunny with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph.		Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.		Breezy. Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers.		Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	
85°	76°	84°	76°	88°	77°	88°	77°	87°	77°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 7:25 AM, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2020
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

East to northeast winds, partly cloudy skies and isolated showers prevail across the Marianas this morning. These conditions will continue through tonight. Models are still consistent in showing a shear line pushing across the Marianas Monday and Monday night. The shear line will bring mostly cloudy skies Monday through Wednesday. Deep-layer moisture will not be so high with 700 mb relative humidity remaining below 50 percent, therefore only isolated showers are expected. High pressure building out over the Northwest Pacific behind the shear line will increase winds over the local area. Expect breezy conditions through at least Friday of the coming week. Wind may gust up to 30 mph Tuesday through Thursday.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Showers	82° / 75°	
Palau	Partly Cloudy	85° / 77°	
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86° / 79°	
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	85° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Windy	86° / 79°	
Kosrae	Windy	86° / 79°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 81°	

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	75° / 61°	
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	52° / 30°	
Hong Kong	Showers	70° / 66°	
Honolulu	Showers	74° / 64°	
London	Showers	48° / 39°	
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	67° / 49°	
Manila	Mostly Sunny	88° / 73°	
Melbourne	Showers	75° / 63°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	79° / 71°	
New York	Showers	52° / 39°	
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	52° / 36°	
Paris	Showers	52° / 45°	
Busan	Mostly Sunny	55° / 48°	
Rome	Showers	61° / 48°	
Salem	Showers	67° / 59°	
San Francisco	Sunny	62° / 47°	
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	54° / 36°	
Tokyo	Sunny	52° / 36°	
Washington, DC	Showers	59° / 45°	

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
2:22 AM	LOW TIDE		-0.66
9:15 AM	HIGH TIDE		1.87
2:48 PM	LOW TIDE		0.90
7:56 PM	HIGH TIDE		1.95

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:43 AM	6:18 PM
Tuesday	6:43 AM	6:19 PM
Wednesday	6:43 AM	6:19 PM
Thursday	6:42 AM	6:19 PM
Friday	6:42 AM	6:20 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	7:24 AM	7:21 PM
Tuesday	-	8:15 AM	8:22 PM
Wednesday	-	9:02 AM	9:22 PM
Thursday	-	9:47 AM	10:21 PM
Friday	-	10:32 AM	11:18 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 6, 2020							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA156	6:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	UA112	4:45pm	5:26pm	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
SKY816	4:35pm	7:30pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7	SKY811	10:15am	3:00pm	Daily
SKY816	5:05pm	8:00pm	6				
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	3:20am	6:30am	Daily	7C3452	9:35pm	2:30am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
				7C3452	10:05pm	2:30am+1	3
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:05am	6:05am	Daily	OZ6233	7:30am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6
OZ626	2:10am	6:05am	1	OZ623	8:10am	1:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7	7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ626	3:35am	7:20am	4	TW309	11:10am	4:40pm	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:35am	Daily	OZ625	7:30pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ6243	3:10pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	TW307	7:45pm	1:05am+1	Daily
OZ624	3:30pm	7:20pm	1, 3, 5, 7	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily	OZ625	9:05pm	2:25am+1	3
TW310	5:40pm	10:15pm	Daily	7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/701	2:10am	10:35am	1 via ICN	UA189/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:35am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR	OZ702/625	12:05pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
UA156/183	6:20pm	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	UA192/174	10:40pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA156/193	6:20pm	11:50pm	2 via GUM-ROR	UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3 via ICN
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ746/6233	12:35am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ746/623	12:35am	1:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
OZ626/721	3:35am	11:50am	4 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ6243/9661	3:10pm	11:15pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ624/9661	3:30pm	11:15pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, BC SkyMark ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)							
STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily	1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily	1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily	1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
				1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily	1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily	1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily				
				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
ROTA TO GUAM				FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily	2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
				2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA				2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily	2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
				2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily	2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily	2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
				2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

Whole Home WiFi Powered by Plume now in Marianas

TAMUNING, Guam—Docomo Pacific, regional leader in innovation, telecommunications & entertainment, brings Whole Home WiFi Powered by Plume to internet subscribers in Guam and the CNMI.

The new internet plan is designed to improve WiFi coverage and speeds and help per-

sonalize and secure the home network. Enabled by Plume's cloud-based artificial intelligence, Whole Home WiFi offers an integrated solution that home-owners control from the Plume app.

Plume works alongside Docomo Pacific's existing internet connection, allowing

customers to make the most of its ultrafast speeds in every corner of their homes, a common challenge when distributing WiFi in homes made of solid concrete.

"It's important for us to provide you with more than just an internet connection. How you connect with your family, in your home is important to us," said Rod Boss, president and CEO of Docomo Pacific.

"We want to give you a high quality, safe and controlled experience at home. Our new Whole Home WiFi service delivers fast and consistent internet throughout your home, it

keeps you safe from potential security threats and gives you better control over your family's digital health. We thank Plume for making this possible."

Docomo Pacific Whole Home WiFi Powered by Plume brings subscribers:

■ **Plume Adaptive WiFi**, which intelligently monitors, adjusts and optimizes your network for peak performance.

■ **HomePass**, which lets members control guest and child access to their network,

set up profiles, and pause the Internet.

■ **AI Security** to detect and block potential security threats, customize content access, and block unwanted ads.

■ **Elegantly designed**, powerful tri-band SuperPods that plug directly into wall sockets to ensure reliable coverage.

■ **The Plume app**, which puts you in control of all of these home services.

"As Docomo Pacific brings a whole home Wi-Fi experi-

ence to its customers, Plume will provide the essential services to enable a personalized and well-connected home. We're thrilled to partner with Docomo Pacific and help bring this service to their customers," said Tyson Marian, CCO of Plume.

Whole Home WiFi Powered by Plume is exclusively available at Docomo Pacific. Add it to your existing bundle or sign up for an internet only with Whole Home WiFi plan today.

Docomo Pacific is a wholly owned subsidiary of NTT Docomo, Japan's leading mobile operator. **(PR)**

United now owns flight training academy

CHICAGO—United Airlines further expanded its innovative Aviate pilot program last Thursday by signing a purchase agreement to become the only major U.S. carrier to own a flight training academy.

The United Aviate Academy will give the airline more visibility and direction over the recruitment, development and training of future pilots, enabling United to increase the percentage of women and minorities who become pilots. United expects approximately 300 students to graduate from the United Aviate Academy in its first full year of operation.

The flight training academy—currently operating as Westwind School of Aeronautics in Phoenix, Arizona—will be an extension of the airline's Aviate program, a pilot development and recruitment program that offers aspiring aviators the most direct path to achieve their dreams of becoming a United pilot. The airline anticipates hiring more than 10,000 pilots by 2029.

"We have developed the Aviate program in collaboration with the Air Line Pilots Association, International to have greater influence on the next generation of aviators at United," said Captain Bebe O'Neil, United's managing director of Aviate. "Launching our own academy provides us with the unique opportunity to not only ensure we maintain the ideal number of quality candidates within our pilot pipeline, but also play a significant role in recruiting, developing and welcoming those with diverse backgrounds to the United family."

In addition to launching the flight academy, United plans to reduce financial barriers to joining the program, making the dream of becoming a United pilot even more accessible to more individuals. The carrier is currently engaging with financial institutions with the goal of making attractive financing terms—such as industry-tailored grace periods and competitive interest rates available to qualified individuals. Additionally, United plans to launch a scholarship program specifically focused on encouraging women and mi-

norities to consider joining the United family. The airline will provide more details regarding these financing options as they become available.

Aviate partners currently include Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Western Michigan University, Lufthansa Aviation Training Academy, University of North Dakota, Hillsboro Aero Academy, US Aviation Academy, Flight Safety International, Ameriflight, Boutique Air, ATP Flight School, ExpressJet, CommutAir, Air Wisconsin, Mesa Airlines, and Florida Institute of Technology.

Last year, United launched Aviate, its innovative pilot recruitment and development program. Those who apply to Aviate and are successful in the selection process will receive a program acceptance job offer with United. Aviate also provides support and coaching for pilots to develop into leaders who exemplify the professionalism, level of excellence and commitment to providing safe, caring, dependable and efficient service that United expects from its pilots. Additionally, Aviate provides those who aspire to a career as a United captain with the most direct route to achieving that goal.

United's Aviate career path program offers pilots competitive benefits, including:

■ **The most direct path** within the industry to a major airline, with an Aviate regional partner minimum requirement of 24 months and 2,000 hours

■ **More options in program** entry points throughout a pilot's career and choice of select United Express carriers

■ **Increased transparency** and clarity along the path from program entry to flying for United

■ **Improved career development**, mentoring and access to United pilots and learning tools.

■ **Immediate inclusion** in the United family, with access to senior leadership, site visits and tours, and certain travel privileges

For more information on Aviate, visit unitedaviate.com. **(PR)**

Kiribati to check temps of all incoming travelers

Effective immediately, all incoming international travelers into all ports of entry of Kiribati will be subjected to temperature check.

This comes soon after the Ministry of Health & Medical Services of the Republic of Kiribati updated its health travel advisory in relation to the 2019 novel coronavirus.

All travellers from areas and territories in countries with ongoing local transmission of novel coronavirus must spend at least 14 days in a country free of the 2019-nCoV. If travelers arrive earlier than the required 14-day-period, health quarantine measures may be applied and deportation to the country of travel origin would be considered depending on the health status of the individual.

The Ministry of Health & Medical Services also recommends that citizens and residents avoid non-essential travel to areas and territories in countries with sustained transmission. However, if travel cannot be postponed, then preventive measures should always be adhered to.

The ministry adds that in case of symptoms suggestive of acute respiratory illness before travel, travelers are encouraged to seek medical attention and advise about



The Ministry of Health & Medical Services of the Republic of Kiribati has updated its health travel advisory in relation to the 2019 novel coronavirus.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

travel restrictions.

In case of symptoms suggestive of acute respiratory illness during and after travel, travelers are encouraged to seek medical attention and share travel history with health care providers.

A Health Arrival Form is to be filled out by all incoming travelers upon arrival to Kiribati through Tarawa and Kiritimati.

All travelers to Kiribati are advised that they must always comply with the following preventive measures:

Avoid close contact with people suffering from acute respiratory infections;

People with symptoms of acute respiratory infection should practice cough etiquette (maintain distance, cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues or clothing and wash hands);

Avoid contact with ani-

mals (alive or dead), visiting animal markets, and purchasing products that come from animals (such as uncooked meat);

Wash hands often with soap and clean water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available;

Older travellers and those with underlying health issues may be at risk for more severe disease and should discuss travel to affect areas and territories with their health care provider;

In order to minimize the risk of transmission, people travelling to the affected area should maintain good hand and personal hygiene;

Travellers should seek medical attention if they develop respiratory symptoms within 14 days if visiting any other affected countries or countries with local transmissions, informing their health

service prior to their attendance about their recent travel to the affected country;

Self-Quarantine at home to minimize spread of infection

These measures have been implemented to protect the population and communities of Kiribati against the coronavirus.

The 33 islands of the Republic of Kiribati (pronounced *Kiribas*) is situated in the heart of the Pacific where the equator and the international datelines meet.

Tarawa is home to the country's main international airport and is serviced by direct flights from Nadi, Fiji, Nauru, Funafuti, Tuvalu, Honiara, Solomon Islands, Majuro, Republic of Marshall Islands, and Brisbane, Australia.

Kiritimati or Christmas Island on the eastern side of the country is serviced by a weekly flight from Nadi, Fiji and Honolulu, Hawaii. **(PR)**

Defective software could have doomed Boeing's crew capsule

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)—Defective software could have doomed Boeing's crew capsule during its first test flight, a botched trip that was cut short and never made it to the International Space Station, NASA and company officials said Friday.

The Starliner capsule launched without astronauts in December, but its automatic timer was off by 11 hours, preventing the capsule from flying to the space station as

planned. This software trouble—which left the capsule in the wrong orbit just after lift-off—set off a scramble to find more possible coding errors, Boeing officials said.

Hours before the Starliner's scheduled touchdown, a second software mistake was discovered, this time involving the Starliner's service module. Flight controllers rushed to fix the problem, which could have caused the cylinder to slam into the

capsule once jettisoned during reentry.

Such an impact could have sent the Starliner into a tumble, said Jim Chilton, a senior vice president for Boeing. In addition, damage to the Starliner's heat shield could have caused the capsule to burn up on reentry, he noted.

He also conceded they wouldn't have found the second problem without the first.

"Nobody is more disappointed in the issues that we

uncovered ... than the Starliner team," said Boeing program manager John Mulholland.

These latest findings stem from a joint investigation team formed by NASA and Boeing in the wake of the aborted test flight. The capsule returned to Earth on Dec. 22 after just two days, parachuting down to a landing in New Mexico.

The mission was supposed to be the company's last major hurdle before launching the first Starliner crew.

Nation

NYPD: Officer shot, wounded in ‘assassination attempt’

NEW YORK (AP)—Two New York City police officers narrowly escaped with their lives when a gunman fired into their patrol van Saturday night, wounding one of them in an attack officials called an attempted assassination.

The ambush, which Police Commissioner Dermot Shea said “should outrage all New Yorkers,” happened just before 8:30 pm in the South Bronx.

The officer at the wheel of the van was grazed in the chin and neck, but he avoided serious injury, Shea said. He was expected to be released from the hospital Sunday.

“He is lucky to be alive,” Shea said. “He is expected to make a full recovery and it is a miracle.”

Shea said the shooting “har-

kens back to some very bad times,” recalling other unprovoked assaults on police officers sitting in their patrol vehicles.

In 2017, a gunman killed Officer Miosotis Familia as she sat in her patrol vehicle in the Bronx. In 2014, two officers, Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu, were shot dead in their patrol car in Brooklyn by a man upset about recent police killings of unarmed black men. Shea said Ramos and Liu’s deaths were “not something that engenders anything but the worst memories.”

Mayor Bill de Blasio, a Democrat, condemned the latest attack at a news briefing outside the Bronx hospital where the wounded officer was being treated.

“There’s too much hatred in general, there’s too much hatred being directed at our officers, and it has to end,” the mayor said. “We have to move forward in a situation like this and find a way to create a peaceful society, not one where those who protect us are in danger in this way.”

The two uniformed officers, partners for eight years and friends since middle school, were sitting in their van with emergency lights activated when a man approached them and engaged them in conversation, Shea said.

The man asked the officers for directions, then pulled out a gun “without provocation,” the commissioner said. The man fired multiple shots, striking the officer behind the

wheel. Shea said the officer’s carotid artery narrowly avoided injury.

Neither officer returned fire. The officer’s partner drove him to a hospital nearby. Shea called both officers “heroic” for their composure and said their long association made for “an amazing story.”

Officers had a basic description of the gunman, who fled after the shooting, but his identity was unknown. Security video that appeared to capture the shooting shows the van driving quickly away as a man appeared to point something at the fleeing vehicle.

The officers had been stationed in the neighborhood because of recent drug activity and violence, Shea said.

The president of the police

union, Pat Lynch, said the department will use “all its re-

sources” to bring the shooter to justice.

ACROSS THE NATION

Neighbors try to stop dog mauling with sticks, gutter, chair

SPRING HILL, Fla.

(AP)—Neighbors used sticks, pieces of a gutter and a lawn chair in an attempt to stop a pack of dogs from mauling a Florida woman, who was critically injured in the attack that lasted at least five minutes, authorities said. Friday’s attack only stopped when firefighters arrived at the home in Spring Hill and used their equipment to disperse the dogs, the Hernando County Sheriff’s Office said in a news release. The woman, who wasn’t identified, was in critical condition at a hospital. Two neighbors who tried to intervene and were bit by the dogs also were taken for treatment at a hospital. Three other neighbors refused medical treatment for minor injuries, the sheriff’s office said. The woman was in her backyard with her small dog when four or five dogs in a neighboring house saw them through a sliding glass door that wasn’t properly closed, authorities said. The neighbor’s dogs then escaped from the house and attacked them, the Hernando County Sheriff’s Office said.

Mom, 6 kids die in Mississippi house fire; dad injured

CLINTON, Miss.

(AP)—A mother and her six children died when a fire destroyed their home early Saturday in central Mississippi, authorities said. The father was the lone survivor of the 12:30 a.m. blaze in Clinton, a city of about 26,500 people just outside the capital city of Jackson. He tried unsuccessfully to save family members and suffered smoke inhalation, burns, cuts and bruises, city spokesman Mark Jones told The Associated Press. He was taken to a local hospital but “wanted to stay at the scene,” Jones said. Officials later released a list of those killed: Brittany Presley, 33, and her children Landon Brookshire, 15; Lane Presley, 13; Lawson Presley, 12; Grayson Presley, 6; Malcom Presley, 4; and Felicity Presley, 1. Brittany Presley was an elementary school teacher, the Canton Public School District said in a statement on Facebook.

Biden tells NH Democrats that Buttigieg ‘not a Barack Obama’

MANCHESTER, N.H.

(AP)—Scrambling to salvage his presidential campaign, Joe Biden escalated his criticism of Pete Buttigieg on Saturday, mocking Buttigieg’s experience as a small city mayor and cutting down the comparisons Buttigieg has drawn to the last Democratic president, declaring: “This guy’s not a Barack Obama.” Biden’s biting attacks on Buttigieg’s relatively thin resume mark a new, more aggressive attempt to slow the momentum of the youngest candidate in the Democratic field. The 38-year-old emerged from Iowa in an effective tie with Sen. Bernie Sanders, but faces questions about whether his eight years as mayor of South Bend, Indiana—a city of about 100,000 people—prepared him for the presidency. “I do not believe we’re a party at risk if I’m the nominee,” Biden told voters in Manchester. “I do believe we’re a party at risk if we nominate someone who has never held a higher office than the mayor of South Bend, Indiana.”

Prosecutor: Boy, 4, dead of gunshot believed self-inflicted

PEMBERTON, N.J.

(AP)—A 4-year-old boy who gained access to an unsecured handgun in a New Jersey home died after an apparently self-inflicted gunshot wound, authorities said. Police and emergency medical personnel were called to a home in the Country Lakes section of Pemberton Township shortly after 7 p.m. Friday and found Lincoln Mack with a gunshot wound, the Burlington County prosecutor’s office and township police said. The boy was transported to Capital Health Emergency Department at Deborah Hospital, where he was pronounced dead at 8 p.m., prosecutors said. Prosecutors said the investigation indicates the boy gained access to an unsecured handgun in the home. “The evidence indicates that the shooting was accidental and appeared to be self-inflicted,” prosecutors said.

Democrats on edge after 2020 election season’s ragged launch



From left, Democratic presidential candidates entrepreneur Andrew Yang, former South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg, Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., former Vice President Joe Biden, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., and businessman Tom Steyer participate Friday, Feb. 7, 2020, in a Democratic presidential primary debate hosted by ABC News, Apple News, and WMUR-TV at Saint Anselm College in Manchester, N.H.

CONCORD, N.H. (AP)—For Democrats, this was supposed to be a moment to begin easing three years of built-up anxieties. Instead, the launch of the 2020 presidential primary has left the party deeply unsettled and President Donald Trump gleeful about the chaos.

Party leaders are on edge over embarrassing technical issues that marred this past week’s Iowa caucuses, as well as lower than expected turnout in the leadoff state. Front-runners Bernie Sanders and Pete Buttigieg face questions about their long-term political viability, while some supporters of the two leading women left in the race—Sens. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota—are raising alarms

about what they view as persistent sexism.

“It’s a hard start,” said Laura Keeler, a 35-year-old from Concord, New Hampshire.

Indeed, it’s far from the 2020 launchpad most Democrats envisioned as they eagerly anticipated their opportunity to take on Trump. The turbulent start to this election year has also crystallized the challenges confronting Democrats in trying to mount a formidable challenge to an incumbent backed by an energized and united Republican Party and fortified by a soaring economy.

“We’re capable of shooting ourselves in the foot,” warned Jim Hodges, an ex-South Carolina governor who supports former Vice President Joe Biden in the 2020 race.

Hodges is among those who predict that Sanders, a Vermont senator who is a self-described democratic socialist, would be a weak general election candidate.

With one primary contest complete and the second scheduled for Tuesday in New Hampshire, some sorting of the Democratic field has begun.

Though The Associated Press has been unable to declare a winner in last Monday’s Iowa caucuses, Sanders and Buttigieg, a former mayor of South Bend, Indiana, emerged in an effective tie.

Biden, the longtime national front-runner, finished a distant fourth in Iowa. He’s now facing a money crunch, a staff shakeup, and a looming challenge from billionaire Michael Bloomberg. The former New

York City mayor isn’t competing in the early states, but is spending hundreds of millions of dollars in later contests.

Sandwiched in between is Warren, who finished third in Iowa and is struggling for a breakout moment. Some Democrats argue that she’s been discounted prematurely, and suggest sexism is at play.

“We’re going to decide after one night in which she placed third, and a strong third, we’re going to decide there are four candidates left, one of whom finished fourth and one of whom wasn’t even running in Iowa,” said Christina Reynolds, vice president of communications at Emily’s List. “It is sadly not surprising because unfortunately it’s happened way too much in this campaign.”

Asia

Soldier kills 26 in bloodiest shooting spree in Thailand

NAKHON RATCHASIMA, Thailand (AP)—A soldier with a grudge gunned down 26 people and wounded 57 in Thailand's worst shooting spree before he was fatally shot inside a mall in the country's northeast on Sunday, officials said.

Officials said the soldier was angry over a financial dispute, first killing two people on a military base and then went on a far bloodier rampage Saturday, shooting as he drove to the mall where shoppers fled in terror.

It took police sharpshooters 16 hours to end the crisis.

Authorities said Sgt. Maj. Jakrapanth Thomma was behind the attack in Nakhon Ratchasima, a hub for Thailand's relatively poorer and rural northeastern region. Much of the shooting took place at Terminal 21 Korat, an airport-themed mall filled with colorful Lego sculptures, a merry-go-round and huge replicas of landmarks from around the world.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha gave the final tally Sunday morning after visiting the wounded in hospitals. He said that of the 57 injured, 25 have been discharged.

Video taken outside the mall showed people diving for cover as shots rang out mid-afternoon Saturday. Many were killed outside the mall, some in cars, others while walking.

Nattaya Nganiem and her family had just finished eating and were driving away when she heard gunfire.



Bullet holes mark the glass wall of the Terminal 21 Korat mall in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020.

AP

"First I saw a woman run out from the mall hysterically," said Nattaya, who shot video of the scene on her phone. "Then a motorcycle rider in front of her just ran and left his motorcycle there."

Hundreds of people were evacuated from the mall in small batches by police while they searched for the gunman.

"We were scared and ran to hide in toilets," said Sumana Jeerawattanasuk, one of those rescued by police. She said seven or eight people hid in the same room as her.

"I am so glad. I was so scared of getting hurt,"

she said.

Shortly before midnight, police announced they had secured the above-ground portion of the mall, but were still searching for the shooter. About 16 hours later, officials held a news conference outside the mall to announce the gunman was fatally shot.

Defense Ministry spokesman Kongcheep told Thai media that the first person killed was the commanding officer of the 22nd Ammunition Battalion, in which the suspect also served. He said the gunman had fired at others at his base and took guns and am-

munition before fleeing in an army Humvee.

City and neighborhood police officers, who asked not to be identified because they were not authorized to release information, said the man fired shots as he drove to the mall. Thai Rath television aired mall security camera footage showing a man with what appeared to be an assault rifle.

The man also posted updates to his Facebook page during the rampage.

"No one can escape death," read one post. Another asked, "Should I give up?"

In a later post, he wrote, "I have stopped already."

A photo circulated on social media that appeared to be taken from the Facebook page shows a man wearing a green camouflaged military helmet while a fireball and black smoke rage behind him. Jakrapanth's profile picture shows him in a mask and dressed in military-style fatigues and armed with a pistol. The background image is of a handgun and bullets. The Facebook page was made inaccessible after the shooting began.

Terminal 21 Korat, a

multi-level glass and steel mall, is designed to resemble an airport terminal, complete with a mock control tower and departure gates. A large model passenger jet dangles from wires beside one of the main escalators.

Each of its seven retail floors is decorated to represent a different country. A giant replica of Paris' Eiffel Tower soars to the ceiling, while a model of London's Big Ben dominates another area, and a massive model of California's Golden Gate Bridge spans an open courtyard. A two-story golden Oscar statue towers over a food court.

Many malls in Thailand, including Terminal 21's namesake in Bangkok, have metal detectors and security cameras at entrances manned by uniformed but unarmed security guards. Checks on those entering are often cursory at best.

In Bangkok, the original Terminal 21 in the bustling heart of the city was filled with shoppers as usual Sunday morning. There were no signs of increased security or commemoration of the tragedy that unfolded a few hours' drive away.

Gun violence is not unheard of in Thailand. Firearms can be obtained legally, and many Thais own guns. Mass shootings are rare, though there are occasional gun battles in the far south of the country, where authorities have for years battled a long-running separatist insurgency.

China's virus death toll surpasses SARS but new cases fall

BEIJING (AP)—China's virus death toll rose by 89 on Sunday to 811, passing the number of fatalities in the 2002-03 SARS epidemic, but fewer new cases were reported in a possible sign its spread might be slowing as other nations stepped up efforts to block the disease.

Also Sunday, South Korea reported a new case in a 73-year-old woman whose relatives visited Guangdong province in southern China. That raised South Korea's total to 25.

In China, some 2,656 new virus cases were reported in the 24 hours ending at midnight Saturday, most of them in the central province of Hubei, where the first patients fell sick in December. That was down by about 20% from the 3,399 new cases reported in the previous 24-hour period.

Outside China and Hong Kong, 288 confirmed cases

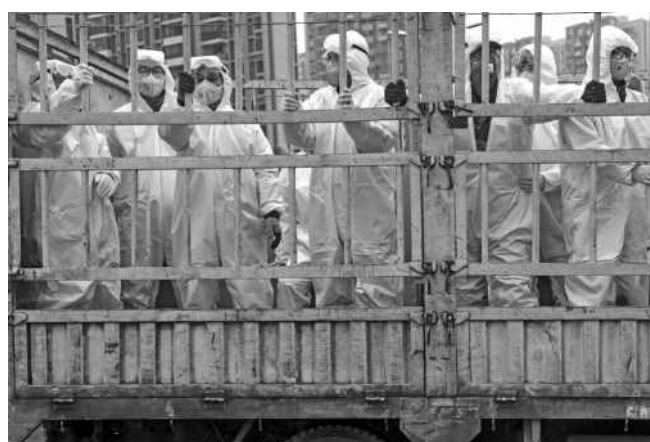
have been reported in 24 countries, according to the World Health Organization.

Experts say the declining daily toll of new cases suggests the virus's spread might be slowing. They say, however, the total will rise further once Chinese laboratories test a backlog of thousands of samples from possible cases.

The fatality toll passed the 774 people believed to have died of severe acute respiratory syndrome, another viral outbreak that also originated in China. The total of 37,198 confirmed cases of the new virus vastly exceeds the 8,098 sickened by SARS.

Meanwhile, a charter flight carrying Filipinos from Wuhan, the city at the center of the outbreak, arrived in the Philippines. The 29 adults and one infant will be quarantined for 14 days, the virus's incubation period.

Elsewhere, France closed



In this Thursday, Feb. 6, 2020, photo, workers in protective suits ride on a truck carrying medical supplies into Huoshenshan temporary hospital built for patients who diagnosed with 2019-nCoV in Wuhan in central China's Hubei province.

AP

two schools and tried to reassure vacationers in the Alps after five Britons contracted the virus at a ski resort.

France stepped up a travel alert, recommending against all visits to China except for "imperative reasons." Italy recommended students returning from China stay home

from school for two weeks after the government reported three cases.

On Saturday, the U.S. State Department said two more flights from Wuhan with American citizens, permanent residents and close relatives landed in the United States. A spokesman said more than

800 American diplomats and others have been evacuated from Wuhan.

The WHO director-general said it will send experts to China starting Monday or Tuesday.

Asked whether that will include members of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus replied, "We hope so."

The American Embassy in Beijing said Saturday a 60-year-old U.S. citizen was among the new fatalities in Wuhan, the first American death reported in the outbreak. A Japanese citizen being treated in Wuhan who was a suspected case also died.

Elsewhere in China, the industrial metropolis of Chongqing in the southwest told residential communities to close their gates and check visitors for fever. The government said the spread of the virus through "family gatherings" had been reported in Chongqing but gave no details.

Japan on Saturday reported three more cases aboard a quarantined cruise ship for a total of 64. There are 3,700 passengers and crew on the Diamond Princess who must remain on board for 14 days.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said foreign passengers on another ship, Holland America's Westerdam, won't be allowed into Japan because of suspected cases on board. The ship, with more than 2,000 people, was near Okinawa and was looking for another port.

Airlines and tourism industries have been battered by the loss of Chinese tourists after Beijing canceled group tours and businesspeople to put off travel in an attempt to contain the disease.

Hong Kong began enforcing a 14-day quarantine for arrivals from mainland China. The territory's chief executive, Carrie Lam, has refused demands by some hospital workers and others to seal the border completely.

World

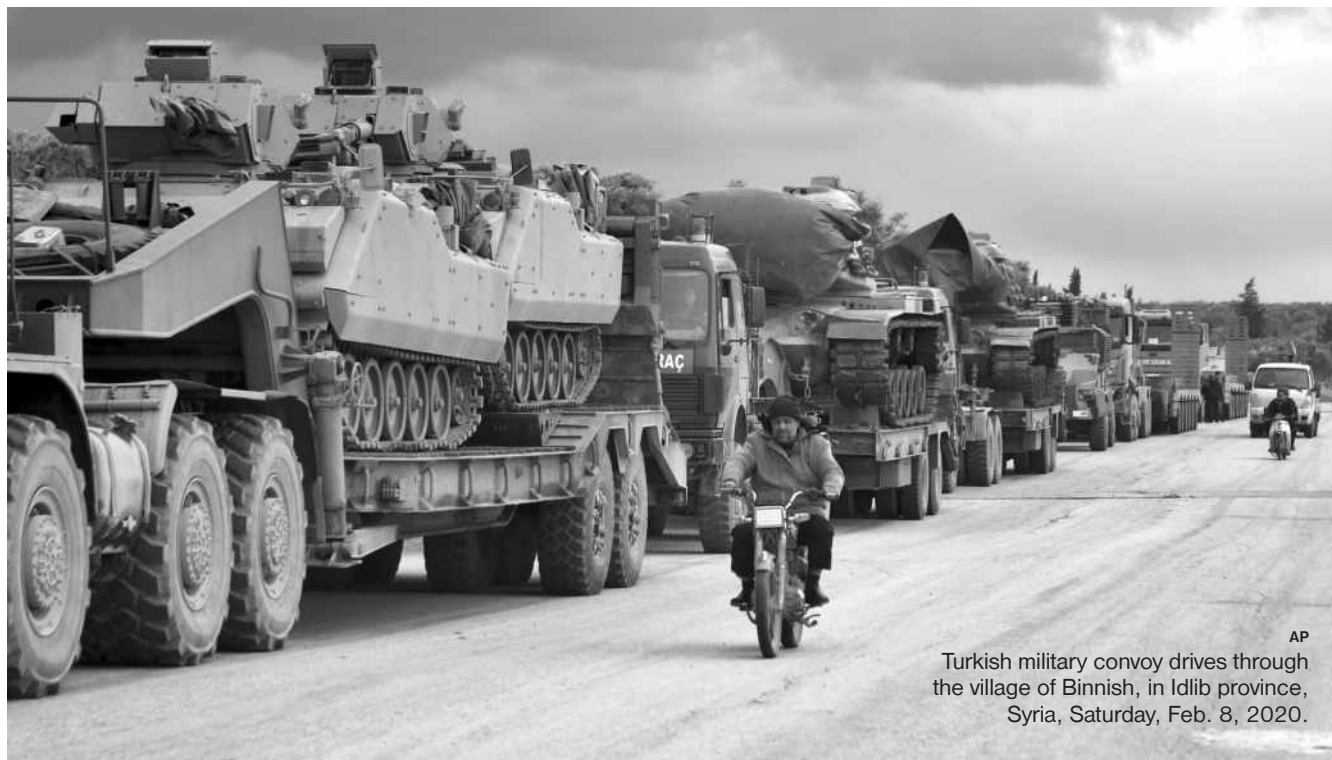
Syrian advance sends hundreds of thousands fleeing in Idlib

BEIRUT (AP)—Turkey on Friday sent more troops and tanks to bolster its military presence in northwestern Syria, where President Bashar Assad's forces have been advancing in a devastating, Russian-backed offensive that has sparked a massive wave of people fleeing in wet and blustery winter weather.

Syria's Idlib region near the border with Turkey is the last rebel-held bastion in the war-ravaged country. The push by Assad's forces into towns and villages in the province over the past months has uprooted more than a half-million people who fled the advancing troops. Many of them already have been displaced several times in the 8-year-old Syrian war.

The campaign also has angered Turkey, which backs the rebels, and brought the two countries' troops into a rare, direct confrontation: At least eight Turkish troops and civilians and 13 Syrian soldiers have been killed.

As Syrian and Russian warplanes indiscriminately pounded hospitals, clinics and schools in the enclave, civilians packed their belongings in cars, taxis and pickup trucks. They streamed toward the Turkish border with few options left that are outside Syrian government control.



AP
Turkish military convoy drives through the village of Binnish, in Idlib province, Syria, Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020.

Many end up in tents or sheltering in abandoned buildings during rainy and windy weather, with temperatures hovering around freezing but predicted to fall over the weekend.

"If they stay, they run the risk of falling victim to the indiscriminate violence taking place in urban areas. If they leave, they have nowhere to go," said Lorenzo Redalié, head of the Aleppo office of the International Committee of the Red Cross. "The shelters can't accommodate

everyone, and it is more and more challenging for humanitarians to reach them and meet their needs."

The Syrian offensive appears aimed for now at securing a strategic highway in rebel-controlled territory, as opposed to an all-out campaign to retake the entire province, including the city of Idlib, the densely populated provincial capital.

Earlier this week, Syrian government troops took control of the former rebel town of Saraqeb, which is strate-

gic because it sits on the intersection of two major highways. One of them leads to the capital, Damascus, to the north, and another connects to the country's western and eastern regions.

Turkey, which backs the Syrian opposition and has been monitoring a cease-fire in the rebel enclave, has protested the government assault, calling it a violation of the truce it negotiated with Russia. In recent weeks, Ankara sent in troops and equipment to reinforce monitoring

points it set up to observe a previous cease-fire, which has since crumbled, and also deployed forces around towns that are threatened by

the Syrian advance.

Associated Press video showed a long line of armored vehicles and trucks, some carrying tanks, filing into rebel-controlled rural areas of the province. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which monitors the war, said the new troops were deployed west of the town of Saraqeb. It was fifth known deployment of new troops into Syria over the last week, according to the Observatory and other opposition news outlets.

"It is shocking that civilians continue to bear the brunt of hostilities between all parties to the conflict," U.N. Human Rights spokeswoman Marta Hurtado said.

"It appears foreign powers are battling for territorial and political gains, while blatantly disregarding their obligation to protect civilians," she told reporters in Geneva.

5 Britons with virus hospitalized in France after stay at Alps lodge

By ANGELA CHARLTON and DANICA KIRKA
ASSOCIATED PRESS

France is closing two schools and trying to reassure vacationers in the Alps after five British citizens, including a 9-year-old child, contracted the new virus from China at a French ski resort.

Saturday's announcement of the five new cases in France at the height of the ski season is the latest example of how the tentacles of the virus can easily spread across multiple borders.

The five British citizens were staying in a chalet in the Alpine ski resort of Contamines-Montjoie near Mont Blanc, and were in close contact with another Briton who apparently contracted the virus in Singapore, traveled to the French Alps and then tested positive for the virus upon return to Britain, French Health Minister Agnes Buzyn told reporters Saturday.

That brings the total number of virus cases in France to 11. Britain has three confirmed cases. The new type of coronavirus has infected more than 34,800 people globally and killed more than 700, nearly all of them in China, since the first illnesses were detected in December.

The five British citizens with new cases of the virus are being held in Lyon-area hospitals, along with six other Britons who were in close contact with them and are now being monitored, the French health ministry said.

The chalet where they were staying housed a British family that lives in Contamines and another family of British vacationers. The sickened child lives in Contamines and attends a local school, and took French classes at another local school, regional officials told a news conference Saturday.

Both schools will be closed, and the pupils will be monitored for signs of the virus.

Local officials sought to reassure tourists descending this weekend on one of the world's most prized ski areas that all preventive measures are being taken to stem further spread of the virus.

"This cluster of cases in France illustrates how the coronavirus can spread to countries indirectly of China. The French ski resort will have citizens from numerous other countries there, so there are implications for potential onward transmission," said Dr. Michael Head, Senior Research Fellow in Global Health, University of Southampton.

After a special virus meeting Saturday, the French government decided to harden its travel warning for China, cautioning against all travel there unless in case of "imperative" need.

The patient in Britain apparently contracted the virus after staying at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Singapore and attending a business conference there Jan. 20-22. There were 94 foreigners in the hotel at the time, including people from Hubei, according to the French minister.

Russia says Israel nearly shot down passenger plane in Syria

MOSCOW (AP)—Russia's Defense Ministry said Friday that Israeli air forces nearly shot down a passenger jetliner in Syria during a missile strike on the suburbs of Damascus a day earlier.

The allegation comes as tensions run high in Syria, where fighting has escalated in the northern province of Idlib. Syrian government forces, backed by the Russian military, have clashed with Turkish troops that support the op-

position there after failing to observe a cease-fire.

A spokesman for the Israeli prime minister did not respond to a request for comment. Israel rarely acknowledges strikes carried out in Syria. Israel has repeatedly struck Syrian and Iran-linked targets in Syria in recent years and has vowed to push back against increasing Iranian influence in its neighboring country.

The news of the alleged

near-miss came amid jitters just a month after a Ukrainian passenger plane crashed shortly after take-off from Tehran, killing all 176 people on board. Iran said the plane was mistakenly shot down by its paramilitary Revolutionary Guard.

In a statement released Friday, Russian Defense Ministry spokesperson Igor Konashenkov said the strike was carried around 2 a.m. local time Thursday. He said four Israeli

F-16 fighter jets hit the suburbs of Damascus with eight missiles without taking into account that a passenger plane with 172 civilians on board was preparing to land in the city's airport around the same time.

Konashenkov didn't name the airline or flight number, saying only that it was an Airbus-320 en route from Tehran that "came near to entering the zone of a deadly anti-aircraft missile and artillery fire."

UN medical relief flights continue from Yemen's capital

CAIRO (AP)—Flights transporting Yemeni medical patients from rebel-held areas continued Saturday when a second plane carrying 24 patients took off from Sanaa bound for Jordan's capital, the U.N. health agency said.

The U.N. flights, which began Feb. 3, are seen as a humanitarian breakthrough in the more than 5-year-old conflict in the Arab world's poorest country. The conflict began with the 2014 takeover of the capital Sanaa by the rebel Houthis, who control much of the country's north.

A Saudi-led military coalition allied with Yemen's internationally recognized government has been fighting the Iran-backed Houthis since 2015. The U.S.-backed coalition closed the airspace and prevented any flights from leaving Sanaa, starting in August 2016.

The Associated Press reported in November that Saudi Arabia and the Houthis are holding indirect, behind-the-scenes talks to end the war mediated by Oman, quoting officials from both sides.

The talks are focused on interim agreements, such as

re-opening Yemen's main international airport in Sanaa, which was shut down by the Saudi-led coalition in 2016.

There has been no announced explanation for the medical flights but they could be a result of talks between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis. The first such flight since the air blockade carrying eight patients and their families left Sanaa on Feb. 3.

Saturday's flight was originally scheduled to depart Sanaa the previous day. However it did not take off "for technical reasons," the World Health Organization said Fri-

day, without giving details.

Twenty-four patients and their family members "have departed on the second flight today from Sanaa to Amman to receive the treatment," the WHO tweeted.

Among those who left Sanaa on Saturday was 30-year-old cancer patient Entisar. WHO said the cancer had spread all over her body.

"The physical & psychological pain is unbearable; all I want is to feel better," she was quoted as saying by the U.N. agency. Her last name was not given.

Focus

China virus cases increase as more preventive measures taken

BEIJING (AP)—The rate of increase in new cases of the virus in China rose again after a brief respite, as the death toll rose to 722 on the mainland and countries around the world enforced stricter measures to contain its spread.

A U.S. citizen died of the virus in Wuhan, the city at the center of the outbreak, in what was apparently the first American death. A Japanese being treated in Wuhan who was a suspected case also died.

Almost all of the new fatalities were in and around Wuhan in central Hubei province. Another 3,399 cases were reported, bringing the total to 34,546, although some of those have recovered. More than 320 cases have been confirmed outside mainland China, including two deaths in Hong Kong and the Philippines.

Three more cruise ship passengers were diagnosed with the virus in Japan for a total of 64 on board the ship.

China's ruling Communist Party faces continuing anger and recriminations from the public over the death of a doctor who was threatened by police after trying to sound the alarm about the disease over a month ago.

A look at the latest developments:

AMERICAN, JAPANESE SUCCUMB IN WUHAN, CRUISE SHIPS QUARANTINED

The U.S. Embassy in Beijing said a 60-year-old U.S. citizen diagnosed with the virus died in Wuhan on Wednesday. The patient was apparently the first American fatality. The embas-



In this Thursday, Feb. 6, 2020, photo, a nurse feeds water to a patient in the isolation ward for 2019-nCoV patients at a hospital in Wuhan in central China's Hubei province.

sy did not identify the person.

Japan's Foreign Ministry said a Japanese man in his 60s being treated in Wuhan also died. It said the patient had been suspected of having the coronavirus, but that it had not been confirmed.

Cruise ship passengers faced more woe as Japan reported three more cases for a total of 64 on one quarantined vessel and turned away another. The three are among 3,700 passengers and crew on the quarantined Diamond Princess. They must remain on board for 14 days.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe

said foreign passengers on another ship, Holland America's Westerdam, won't be allowed into Japan. He said suspected virus patients were on board. The ship, with more than 2,000 people, was near Okinawa and was seeking another port, said Overseas Travel Agency official Mie Matsubara.

"We are getting desperate," she said. "We hope we can go somewhere so that passengers can land."

Hong Kong began enforcing a 14-day quarantine for arrivals from mainland China on Saturday.

Hong Kong has refused

to completely seal its border but hopes the quarantine will dissuade travelers from the mainland.

PUSH TO ENSURE FOOD SUPPLY IN QUARANTINE ZONES

China's leaders are trying to keep food flowing to crowded cities despite anti-disease controls and to quell fears of possible shortages and price spikes following panic buying after most access to Wuhan and nearby cities was cut off.

Employees at the Wushang Mart wore masks and protective suits. Customers washed

their hands with disinfectant and were checked for the virus's telltale fever, said the manager, who would give only her surname, Lu.

"It is normal for people to worry about supply, but we explain there will be enough," Lu said by phone.

Food stocks in supermarkets ran low shortly after Beijing imposed travel curbs and extended the Lunar New Year holiday to keep factories, offices and other businesses closed and the public at home in an attempt to prevent the virus from spreading.

That also kept trucks off

the road, disrupting supplies of food to markets, feed to farmers and poultry to slaughterhouses. As the shutdown of Wuhan expanded to cover cities with a total of 60 million people, villagers set up their own roadblocks to keep outsiders and possible infection away.

A Cabinet official acknowledged vegetable supplies were uneven and some "daily necessities" were sold out.

Even getting out to shop is a challenge in some cities that are under almost total quarantine.

Only one member of each household is allowed out each day to shop for food in Hangzhou, an industrial metropolis of 10 million people southwest of Shanghai, and in Huanggang, a city of 1 million near Wuhan.

ANGER SIMMERS OVER DEATH OF DOCTOR THREATENED BY POLICE

Public anger continued to simmer over the authorities' treatment of a young doctor who was reprimanded by police for issuing a warning about the virus before being infected and dying this week.

In death, 34-year-old Li Wenliang became the face of anger at the ruling Communist Party's controls over information and complaints that officials lie about or hide disease outbreaks, chemical spills, dangerous consumer products or financial frauds.

The 34-year-old ophthalmologist died overnight at Wuhan Central Hospital, where he worked and likely contracted the virus while treating patients in the early days of the outbreak.

THE LATEST

BEIJING (AP)—The Latest on a virus outbreak that began in China (all times local):

12:15 a.m.

The head of the World Health Organization says it received a response from China on Saturday on the dispatch of a WHO-led international mission to the country, where a new virus has emerged.

Director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus says the team leader will leave on Monday or Tuesday and the rest of the experts will follow. Asked whether members of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will be part of the team, he replied, "We hope so."

Tedros wouldn't immediately name the leader or the rest of the team, or give further details, saying that WHO will "publicize everything as soon as we're ready."

■ ■ ■

Singapore's prime minister is urging citizens to stay calm following a wave

of panic buying that emptied many supermarket shelves of essential goods after the government raised the risk alert level over a new virus.

Pictures on social media showed people flocking to buy toilet paper, canned food and instant noodles from supermarkets.

In a video posted on social media Saturday, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said there was no need to panic because there are ample supplies and "we are not locking down the city or confining everybody to stay at home."

He said Singapore last raised the health alert to orange in 2009 during the H1N1 swine flu outbreak, and did so again now to step up precautionary measures. He said the city is much better prepared now after dealing with the SARS epidemic in 2003 that killed 33 people in the city-state.

Lee asked citizens to have courage, warning that "fear can do more harm than the virus." He said the

"real test is to our social cohesion and psychological resilience."

Hours after Lee's message, officials confirmed seven new local cases, including two more citizens who attended a company conference at the Grand Hyatt last month. The meeting was attended by delegates from China. Several participants from Malaysia, South Korea and Britain have also diagnosed with the virus. There are now 40 confirmed cases in the city-state.

■ ■ ■

Hong Kong has quarantined 161 people who arrived from mainland China on Saturday as a new emergency measure to stem the spread of the virus begins.

Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam said nearly 90% of those quarantined are Hong Kong citizens. She said 148 are confined at home, 11 at hotels and two at quarantine camps.

The international financial hub has

shut many border checkpoints but refused to completely seal its border because it relies on mainland China for food and other goods. It instead imposed a 14-day quarantine starting Saturday on all people arriving from mainland China to dissuade cross-border travel. Workers in logistic services such as truck drivers and flight crews are exempted.

Lam warned Saturday that random checks will be conducted and those who violate the quarantine will face up to six months in jail and a fine.

Meanwhile, health authorities said they would test over 1,800 crew members on the World Dream cruise ship for the virus. The ship has been under quarantine since Wednesday after eight mainland passengers on an earlier voyage tested positive for the virus. Tests on more than 30 crew members and passengers who showed symptoms have been negative so far.

■ ■ ■

France has confirmed five additional cases of the new virus spreading from China, including one child.

The announcement Saturday by Health Minister Agnes Buzyn brings the total number of people confirmed with the virus in France to 11.

The new cases were identified in the Alpine resort town of Contamines-Montjoie near Mont Blanc. Buzyn said they appear linked to a British person who stayed there in late January and was later confirmed to have the virus after returning to Britain.

French authorities are working with international partners to trace everyone who was in close contact with the British person and with the newly infected people in France.

The French government has brought hundreds of people from European and African countries back from Wuhan, the epicenter of the outbreak. Those who stayed in France are in quarantine. (AP)

Health & Wellness

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What is a pandemic? Does the coronavirus qualify?

By EMILY BAUMGAERTNER
LOS ANGELES TIMES/TNS

The coronavirus outbreak that originated in China is serious enough to qualify as a global health emergency. But is it a pandemic?

Excellent question. Let's review some epidemiology basics to find out.

Think back to the town where you grew up, and the infections that made the rounds. An "endemic" level of disease—or a community's baseline prevalence of it—isn't always zero. Consider chicken pox in the United States, or malaria in some African countries. Endemic disease certainly isn't preferable, but it's expected.

A sudden increase in the number of people with a particular disease in a limited area can signal the onset of an outbreak. So can the emergence of an unusual type of disease, such as a strain of the flu that's never been seen before.

If an outbreak expands to a broader population, it becomes an epidemic. That's the case with the novel coronavirus spreading in China and beyond.

The decision by the World Health Organization to declare a "public health emergency of international concern" wasn't an arbitrary one. The WHO considers three factors when weighing that designation:

1 Is the outbreak unusual or unexpected? With a never-before-seen virus like 2019-nCoV, the answer is yes.

2 Does the outbreak have implications for health beyond a national border? With dozens of exported cases on four continents, the answer is another yes.

3 Does the outbreak require immediate international action? Since airport screenings and aid money are needed to contain the virus' spread, the answer is once again yes.

But epidemics can be severe without ever rising to the level of a pandemic, so long as they predominantly affect one region—in this case, China.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines a pandemic as one that has spread to several countries or continents, usually affecting a large number of people. The severity of illnesses is not a consideration, nor is the number of deaths.

There are currently 35 confirmed coronavirus cases in Japan, 28 in Singapore and 25 in Thailand, for example. Compared with China, which is dealing with more than 28,000 cases, most experts agree: It's not a pandemic—yet.

But as scientists learn more about the virus, the prospect of a pandemic looks increasingly likely.

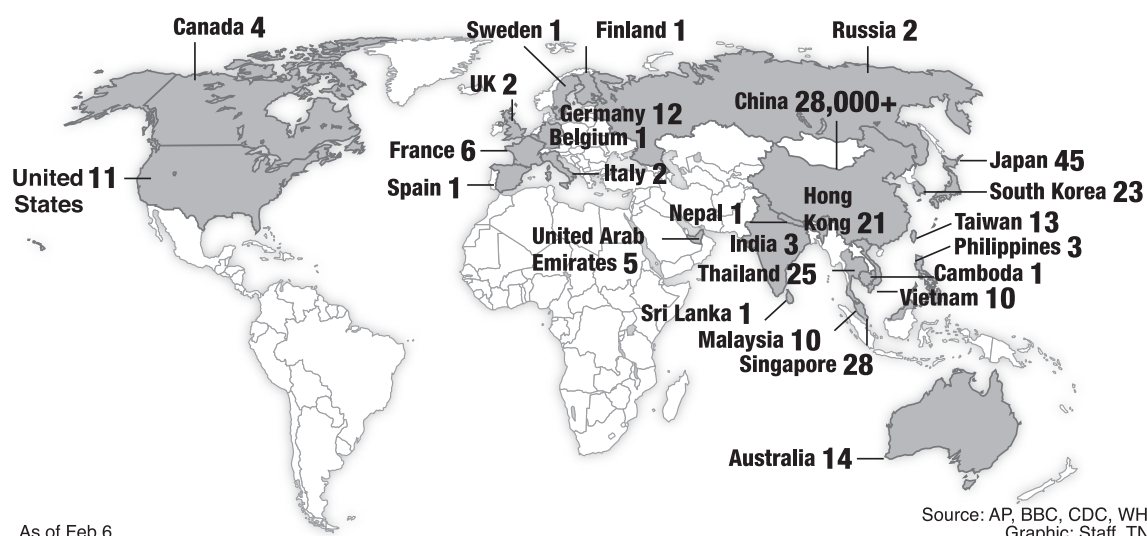
"Diseases are not terribly good at respecting borders," said Alex Azar, secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.

The new coronavirus appears to be spreading readily between humans. That makes it more similar to influenza—a classic pandemic agent—than to other coronaviruses.

At least 10 2019-nCoV patients in

Coronavirus cases near 30,000

Chinese health authorities reported 563 deaths and another sharp jump in the number of confirmed cases to 28,018. Outside mainland China, at least 260 cases have been confirmed, including two deaths in Hong Kong and the Philippines.



Map showing the number of coronavirus cases outside China.



A university student measures the body temperature of a fellow student on Feb. 6, 2020 in Manila, Philippines. The Philippines' Department of Health announced the country's first death due to the coronavirus on Feb. 2, the first reported death outside of China.

Germany became sick despite having no travel history to China; the same is true for five patients in Korea, three in Japan, and two in the United States. If the coronavirus is soon contained in those countries, "we would just call those individual outbreaks that occurred and were controlled," said Dr. Tom Inglesby, director of the Center for Health Security at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

But if the number of cases in Europe and the United States drastically escalate with no clear ties back to China, "that is enough to call it a pandemic," he said.

Beyond the case count, a pandemic contrasts with an epidemic because it has global consequences. Right now, the hit to China's workforce is steep, but few other countries face a real health or economic crisis. Aside from airport screenings and frequent hand-

washing, it's mostly business as usual.

The coronavirus that causes Middle Eastern respiratory syndrome, or MERS, never got past this stage. Since it began circulating in humans in 2012, MERS has infected only about 2,500 people, mostly in and around the Arabian Peninsula.

On the other hand, the coronavirus responsible for severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, earned pandemic status because it affected 26 countries, with ongoing chains of transmission not just in China, the epicenter, but also in Canada, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, and Vietnam.

The new coronavirus could wind up following the path of the H1N1 swine flu, which caused a pandemic in 2009. That outbreak subsided in 2010, but the virus continues to circulate as one of the primary strains of the seasonal flu.

Sam Scheiner, a mathematical modeling expert for infectious diseases at the National Science Foundation, said that if 2019-nCoV joins the list of seasonal respiratory viruses, it could ultimately lead to tens of thousands of deaths in the United States each year.

Your music playlist really does affect your workout, study says

By CRYSTAL VILLARREAL
THE ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION/TNS

Whether you prefer pop, rock or hip-hop, the kind of music on your workout playlist can make a difference.

According to a new study, high-tempo music can reduce the amount of perceived effort of a workout and help boost cardiovascular benefits more than slower tempos. The tempo of the music needs to equate to about 170 heartbeats per minute, researchers say.

The new study was published in the journal *Frontiers in Psy-*

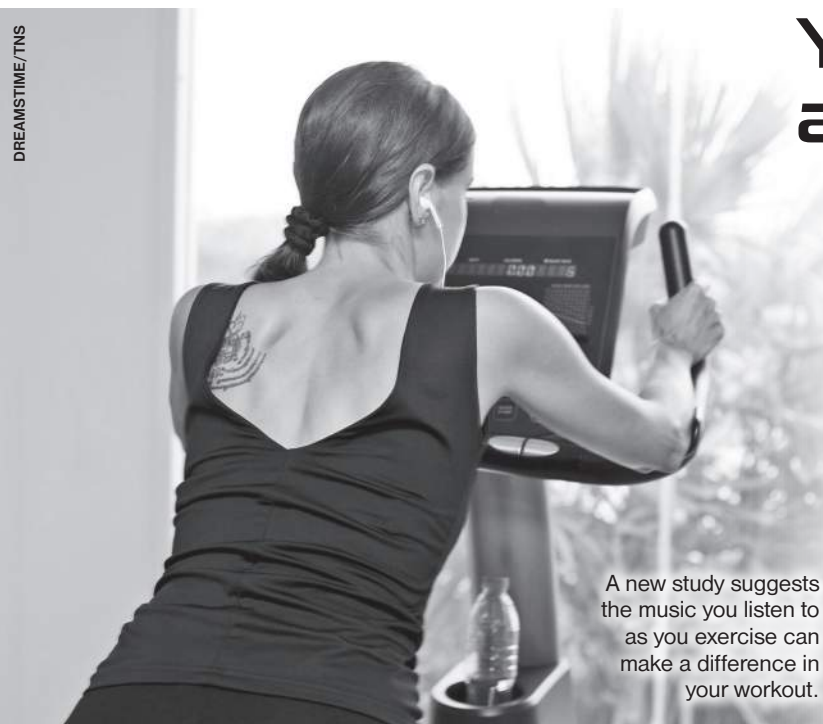
chology, and researchers discovered that music can boost your mood before exercise, and inspire bursts of effort, performance and endurance, all while minimizing perceptions of pain and fatigue.

"We found that listening to high-tempo music while exercising resulted in the highest heart rate and lowest perceived exertion compared with not listening to music," study author Luca Ardigo, a professor at the University of Verona in Italy, said in a statement. "This means that the exercise seemed like less effort, but it was more

beneficial in terms of enhancing physical fitness."

The study examined 19 active women of various ages during endurance workouts under four conditions: without music, with music at 90-110 beats per minute (bpm), with music at 130-150 bpm and with music at 170-190 bpm. The study found the effects were greatest for endurance exercise, such as brisk walking, running, biking and swimming, than for high-intensity exercises such as weightlifting, jump roping, speed walking and high intensity interval training, according to CNN.

DREAMSTIME/TNS



A new study suggests the music you listen to as you exercise can make a difference in your workout.

Life & Style

'The Farewell,' Adam Sandler triumph at Spirit Awards

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP)—At a Film Independent Spirit Awards that often stood in stark contrast to Sunday's Academy Awards, Lulu Wang's family drama "The Farewell" took the top prize, while Adam Sandler and the Safdie brothers' "Uncut Gems" also landed awards.

The win Saturday for "The Farewell" was a surprise, but also a fitting finale to a Spirit Awards that exalted female filmmakers and put forth a far more diverse field of nominees than the film academy. Wang referenced the conversation around the dearth of female

filmmaker nominated by the Academy Awards in her speech.

"You don't have to encourage women. There are lots of women making films, in film school," said Wang. "What women need is just the job. Give them the freaking job!"

The Spirits, held in an ocean-side tent on the Santa Monica, California, beach the day before the Oscars, often diverges greatly in tone from the weekend's other, more formally attired award show across town. But the winners—including "Moonlight," "Spotlight" and "Birdman"—have often lined up.

Yet more so than in years, the Spirit Awards hardly overlapped with the Oscars this time around. "The Farewell" was shutout by the film academy, which instead heaped nominations on bigger-budget epics including "1917," "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood" and "The Irishman." The Spirits, the premier awards ceremony for indie film, cap nominees at a budget of \$22.5 million.

"The Farewell" also won best supporting performance by a female actor for Zhao Shuzhen, the grandmother ("Nai Nai") in the film. Many expected the award to go to Jennifer Lopez ("Hustlers"). Wang said Shuzhen, a Chinese actress, couldn't attend the show because of coronavirus travel restrictions.

The boutique studio A24 dominated the Spirits, winning trophies for "The Farewell," "Uncut Gems" and "The Lighthouse." "Uncut Gems" led all films with three awards, including best performance by a male actor for Sandler, best director for Josh and Ben Safdie, and best editing.

Sandler, who received a standing ovation, compared



From left, Peter Saraf, Daniele Melia, Lulu Wang, Andrew Miano, Eddie Rubin, Anita Gou pose in the press room with the award for best feature for "The Farewell" at the 35th Film Independent Spirit Awards on Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020, in Santa Monica, Calif. Lulu Wang, center, also poses with the award for best supporting female for "The Farewell," which she accepted on behalf of Zhao Shuzhen.

CBS News head calls threats against Gayle King reprehensible

NEW YORK (AP)—The CBS News chief called threats against journalist Gayle King "reprehensible" Saturday as backlash grew against rapper Snoop Dogg and others criti-



King

cal of King for an interview where she asked about a sexual assault charge against the late Kobe Bryant.

Snoop Dogg had threatened King online this week following her interview with WNBA player Lisa Leslie about Bryant, the former Los Angeles Lakers star killed in a helicopter crash on Jan. 26.

"We fully support Gayle King and her integrity as a journalist," CBS News President Susan Zirinsky told the Associated Press. "We find the threats against her or any journalist doing their job reprehensible."

CBS would not discuss the nature of any private threats against King. Her friend, Oprah Winfrey, said in an NBC interview that King had received death threats and was traveling with security.

The rapper had joined with others, including 50 Cent and Bill Cosby, in criticizing King for asking Leslie whether Bryant's legacy had been complicated by the accusation that he raped a woman at a Colorado resort in 2003. Bryant said the two had consensual sex, but he later apologized for his behavior and settled a civil suit against him.

In a profane video posted on Instagram and shared on other social media platforms, Snoop Dogg criticized King for attacking "your people." He told her to "back off ... before we come get you."

King's questions had attracted little notice as part of a wide-ranging interview shown on "CBS This Morning." But then CBS—mistakenly, it said later—posted a video online that focused strictly on the discussion about the assault case.

"The interview with Lisa Leslie was comprehensive and thoughtful," Zirinsky said. "We are a country where differences of opinion are welcome, but hateful and dangerous threats are completely unacceptable."

King's critics essentially voiced some variation of what Leslie answered—that the media should be more respectful of Bryant so soon after his death and not discuss this stain upon his record—although usually in sharper terms.

Besides her boss, other people have begun coming to King's defense, including Sen. Cory Booker, former U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice and NBC morning show host Willie Geist.

"For those threatening her and inciting violence, stop it immediately," the New Jersey senator tweeted. "This is unacceptable. We must do better."

his Oscar "snub" to losing best looking in high school. But he did win best personality, an honor he compared to his Spirit Award.

"As I look around this room, I realize the Independent Film Spirit Awards are the Best Personality Awards," Sandler joked. Referring to the Oscar nominees he said, "Their handsome good looks will fade in time, while our independent personalities will shine on forever."

Only one Oscar favorite among the actors was also

competing at the Spirits: Renée Zellweger. She won for her performance in the Judy Garland drama "Judy." "Cheers to you from the beach, Ms. Garland," Zellweger said.

And just one movie up for best picture on Sunday was nominated for the Spirit Awards' top prize: Noah Baumbach's "Marriage Story." It won for Baumbach's screenplay and was awarded the Spirits' ensemble award, dubbed the Robert Altman Award.

Baumbach thanked "Parasite" director Bong Joon

Ho—the category's expected co-winner on Sunday—for not being nominated for best screenplay. (Though a favorite for top awards on Sunday, "Parasite" won a single award at the Spirits, for best international film.)

In his second speech of the afternoon, Baumbach dismissed the idea that independent film and the Spirit Awards are "the minor leagues."

"To me the movies we're celebrating here today, they are the movies," said Baumbach. "They are as major as anything."

Michelle Obama, Oprah Winfrey headline arena like rock stars

NEW YORK (AP)—Michelle Obama and Oprah Winfrey headlined Brooklyn's Barclays Center like an A-list duo Saturday, getting a rock-star like applause from a feverish audience of fans on a stage typically reserved for pop, rap and basketball stars.

It was the fifth tour stop of "Oprah's 2020 Vision: Your Life in Focus," Winfrey's full-day wellness event with WW (Weight Watchers Reimagined) that had the New York venue usually holding concerts at night buzzing with bright-eyed attendees lined up as early as 8 a.m.

It marked Obama's return to Barclays just 14 months after appearing at the arena for her own sold-out tour to promote "Becoming," which has sold more than 11.5 million units worldwide and won a Grammy Award last month.

"Does this feel like déjà vu for you?" Winfrey asked. "Because you were here wearing those bad, Balenciaga gold boots!"

"Barack is like, 'Where are those boots?'" Obama said. "I was like, 'They're put away,

honey. Just settle down.'"

The former U.S. president was one of the main topics discussed during the wide-ranging, hourlong conversation which, at times, had the former first lady coming off like a comedian headlining a sold-out show.

"All of the people in this room paid money to come out, to give up a Saturday..." Winfrey said before Obama chimed in with: "And as I said—ain't nobody twerking onstage."

The audience erupted in laughter.

Obama cracked more jokes when she told Winfrey that she and her husband were now empty nesters since their 18-year-old daughter, Sasha, began college last fall (Malia, 21, is a junior).

"We tried to hold it together, to get (Sasha) in the car so she wouldn't start crying, and then me and Barack, we bawled like little babies. Barack gets that ugly, loud cry," Obama said, imitating his cry and earning laughs from the crowd.

"He did that at Malia's graduation," she added. "We're sitting there, and he had his

glasses on and speeches are happening and we're all chatting, and we hear," she said, imitating his cry again while laughing herself.

"And I'm looking at him like, 'Are you OK?'" she recalled. "He's going to kill me."

When Winfrey asked if the energy in their home was different now that the kids are gone, Obama exclaimed: "It is so good, y'all."

"OK, you guys, get out of the gutter!" Obama added.

"Parenting takes up a lot of emotional space. And my husband was busy being president," she said as the audience cheered loudly.

"Don't we wish. Don't we wish," Winfrey said.

"Just vote y'all, that's all I'm saying," Obama continued. "Just vote."

The conversation turned slightly political, again, when Winfrey asked Obama what the next chapter of her life would entail.

"President," some audience members yelled. Others screamed, "White House!"

Obama, 56, said she didn't

want to get political during the chat but that she wants to spend her career empowering young people, calling them the "next generation of leaders."

"To help them understand a broader sense of values that they can operate within because I do think that we are short on that right now, that are leaders are not paving a good path for what we want our kids to be," she said. "I'm sorry to say that. I don't want to make this political in any way."

She also opened up about her marriage, saying that going to therapy taught her that she is responsible for her own happiness.

"I didn't marry Barack for him to make me happy," she said.

"We're coming back to the point where we see each other again because some of the hardest times in our lives we just escaped it, we survived it," she added. "And we went through a tough time. We did some hard things together and now we're out on the other end and I can look at him and I still recognize my husband. He's still the man that I fell in love with."

From Pitt to '1917,' what to anticipate at the Oscars

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Oscars are here, already.

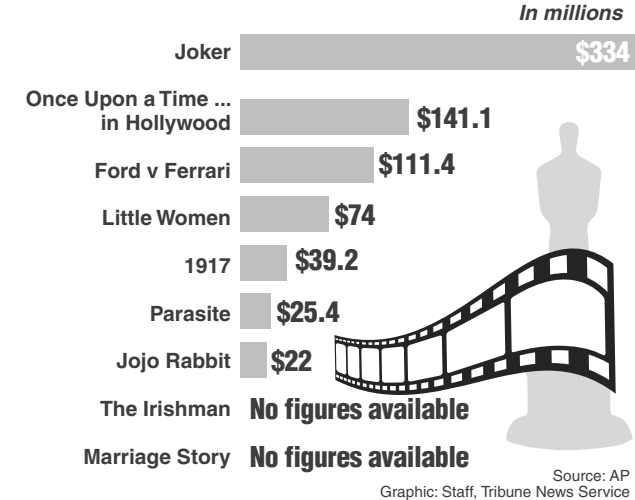
After the shortest awards season in decades, the 92nd annual Academy Awards will get underway Sunday evening at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. The red carpet is being rolled out two to three weeks earlier than usual in a bid to freshen up a ceremony and potentially boost ratings.

The truncated time table has put the normally bloated Oscars season on a diet (Sunday's show will also for the second straight year be host-less) and sent film academy members scrambling to finish their movie-watching—no small task in a year featuring a few three-hour epics like “The Irishman” and “Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood.”

Fittingly for a fast race, a

Oscar nominees at the box office

Here's how the nine films nominated for best picture for the 92nd Academy Awards have fared at the global box office.



movie about a mad dash has risen to the top of the heap. After winning nearly every major precursor award, Sam Mendes’

“1917,” about a pair of British soldiers sent with an urgent message to deliver through recently-held enemy territory,

is the favorite for best picture. Thanks to its technical dazzle, the seemingly one-continuous-shot “1917” is also likely to come away with the most awards Sunday, even without any acting nominations.

Although Joaquin Phoenix, Renée Zellweger, Brad Pitt and Laura Dern all appear to be all-but-certain locks in the acting categories, there’s still the potential for a history-making upset. Momentum has swung behind Bong Joon Ho’s South Korean thriller “Parasite,” and some believe it has a chance to become the first non-English language film to win best picture.

Such a win would be a watershed moment for the Academy Awards, which has long been content to relegate international films to their own category. But in an effort to diversify its largely white and male membership, the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences has inducted more overseas members in recent years. And just about no one has a bad word to say about the widely-praised class satire “Parasite,” the Palme d’Or winner at last year’s Cannes Film Festival and the first foreign language film to win top honors from the Screen Actors Guild Awards.

The official pre-show will begin at 6:30 p.m. EST on ABC. Among the presenters the academy will lean on in the absence of a host are: Tom Hanks, Maya Rudolph, Spike Lee, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Chris Rock, Timothee Chalamet, Will Ferrell, Diane Keaton and Kelly Marie Tran.

The ceremony will come just days after the death of Kirk Douglas, one of the last surviving stars of Hollywood’s golden age. Kobe Bryant, a 2018 Oscar winner for the short “Dear Basketball,” is expected to be included in the ceremony’s In Memoriam segment.

ABC and the academy will be hoping a widely watched field of nominees—including the \$1 billion-grossing



Scenic artist Rick Roberts prepares Oscar statues off of Hollywood Boulevard before Sunday's 92nd Academy Awards at the Dolby Theatre, Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2020, in Los Angeles.

AP

“Joker,” up for a leading 11 awards—will help viewership. Last year’s show garnered 29.6 million viewers, a 12% uptick.

This year’s Oscars comes amid a streaming overhaul throughout Hollywood. Hurrying to catch up to Netflix and Amazon, most of the major studios are prepping or have already launched their own streaming services, as have new entrants like Apple. Netflix comes into the Oscars with a leading 24 nominations thanks to “The Irishman,” “Marriage Story,” “The Two Papes” and the likely best documentary winner, “American Factory.”

But despite spending heavily through awards season, Netflix may go home with only a few awards. The streamer is still seeking its first best picture win after Alfonso Cuarón’s “Roma” came up just shy last year.

Instead, this year’s Oscar favorites are largely movies released widely in theaters. They also predominantly feature male characters and come from male directors.

After a year in which women made significant gains behind the camera, no female directors were nominated for best director. The acting categories are also the least diverse since the fallout of #OscarsSoWhite pushed the academy to remake its membership. Cynthia Erivo (“Harriet”) is the only actor of color nominated. Those results, which have been a topic in speeches through awards season, stand in contrast to research that suggests the most popular movies star more people of color than ever before.

Ticket sales slumped about 4% last year despite the Walt Disney Co.’s record \$13 billion in worldwide box office. Disney, which acquired 20th Century Fox last spring, accounted for an overwhelming 38% of domestic ticket sales. And yet Disney, aside from owning the network the Oscars are broadcast on, will likely play a minor role at the Academy Awards. The studio may win best animated feature with “Toy Story 4” and possibly best editing for the Fox film “Ford v Ferrari.”

And while Democratic candidates are vying for the presidency and votes are still being counted in Iowa, Barack Obama may well notch another win. The first film from his and Michelle Obama’s production company, “American Factory,” is favored to win best documentary.

THE OSCARS 2020 nominations

The 92nd annual Academy Awards will be presented Sunday. Nominees in major categories:

BEST ACTOR

Antonio Banderas
“Pain and Glory”
Leonardo DiCaprio
“Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood”
Adam Driver
“Marriage Story”
Joaquin Phoenix
“Joker”
Jonathan Pryce
“The Two Papes”

BEST ACTRESS

Cynthia Erivo
“Harriet”
Scarlett Johansson
“Marriage Story”
Saoirse Ronan
“Little Women”
Charlize Theron
“Bombshell”
Renée Zellweger
“Judy”

BEST DIRECTOR

Bong Joon Ho
“Parasite”
Martin Scorsese
“The Irishman”
Todd Phillips
“Joker”
Sam Mendes
“1917”
Quentin Tarantino
“Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood”

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR

Tom Hanks
“A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood”
Anthony Hopkins
“The Two Papes”
Al Pacino
“The Irishman”
Joe Pesci
“The Irishman”
Brad Pitt
“Once Upon a Time ... In Hollywood”

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

Kathy Bates
“Richard Jewell”
Laura Dern
“Marriage Story”
Scarlett Johansson
“Jojo Rabbit”
Florence Pugh
“Little Women”
Margot Robbie
“Bombshell”

BEST PICTURE

“Ford v Ferrari”
“The Irishman”
“Jojo Rabbit”
“Joker”
“Little Women”
“Marriage Story”
“1917”
“Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood”
“Parasite”

BEST FOREIGN LANGUAGE FILM

“Corpus Christi”
Poland
“Honeyland”
North Macedonia
“Les Misérables”
France
“Pain and Glory”
Spain
“Parasite”
South Korea

BEST DOCUMENTARY

“American Factory”
“The Cave”
“The Edge of Democracy”
“For Sama”
“Honeyland”

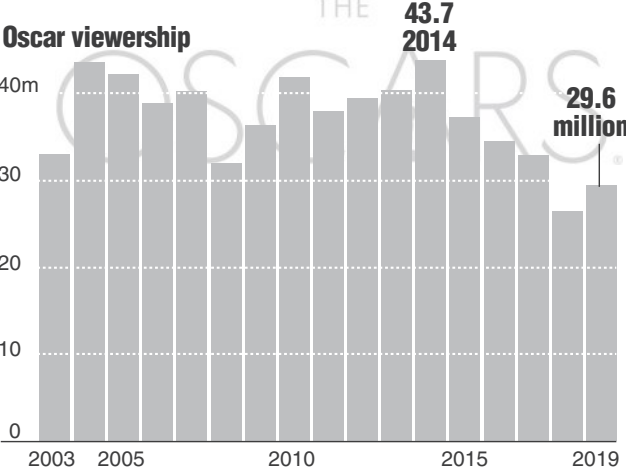
BEST ANIMATED FEATURE

“How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World”
“I Lost My Body”
“Klaus”
“Missing Link”
“Toy Story 4”

Source: Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences
Graphic: Staff, TNS

Oscar viewership over the years

The Oscars ended its four-year streak of dwindling viewership in 2019, reaching 29.6 million to beat 2018's audience by 12 percent.



Judge: Kesha made a false claim about producer Dr. Luke

NEW YORK (AP) —Pop singer Kesha made a false claim that Dr. Luke raped Katy Perry when there's "no evidence whatsoever" that he did, a judge ruled this week while sending a long-running clash between Kesha and her former mentor toward trial.

Kesha's lawyers said in a statement that they plan to appeal Thursday's ruling, which also says she owes the prominent producer over \$373,000 in interest on royalties she paid him years late.

The decision isn't the final word in Dr. Luke's wider-ranging defamation and

breach-of-contract suit against Kesha, but his lawyer said the ruling "brings him closer to the justice that he seeks."

"Dr. Luke looks forward to the trial of his case, where he will prove that Kesha's other false statements about him were equally false and defamatory," said the attorney, Christine Lepera.

Kesha, known for such hits as "TiK ToK" and "Praying," and Dr. Luke have been locked in court battles since 2014, when she filed a lawsuit

alleging that he drugged and raped her in 2005 and emotionally abused her for years.

He denied it and sued her, saying she was smearing him with fabrications to try to get out of her record deal.

A New York court later dismissed Kesha's sexual abuse-related claims because of time limits and other legal issues, without ruling on whether the allegations had merit.

Meanwhile, Kesha claimed —in a 2016 text message to Lady Gaga—that "Firework"

singer Katy Perry "was raped by the same man."

Dr. Luke, born Lukasz Gottwald, denies it, and Perry said it was "absolutely not" true during sworn questioning in 2017.

"There is no evidence whatsoever that Gottwald raped Katy Perry," Manhattan judge Jennifer Schechter wrote in Thursday's decision, calling Kesha's remark a false statement that meets legal standards for being defamatory.

The finding is helpful to

Dr. Luke. But the judge noted that many aspects of the suit remain to be decided, including the question of whether Kesha's allegation of her own rape is true.

"Kesha and Gottwald have very different accounts of what happened on the night at issue. This court cannot decide, as a matter of law on papers and without any assessment of credibility, who should be believed," the judge wrote. "That is a decision for the jury."

Autopsy: Nick Gordon died from heroin overdose

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Bobbi Kristina Brown's ex-partner died last month from a heroin overdose, an autopsy found.

Nick Gordon, whose legal name is Nicholas Boulter, died from an accidental overdose on New Year's Day, the medical examiner in Seminole County, Florida, found in an autopsy released Thursday.

Gordon, 30, was found unresponsive at a Sheraton hotel in the Orlando-area suburb of Maitland, police said. He was taken to a nearby hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Gordon's death came nearly five years after Brown, the daughter of singers Whitney Houston and Bobby Brown, was found face-down and unresponsive in a bathtub at her home north of Atlanta,

Georgia. The 22-year-old died after six months in a coma. Houston drowned in a bathtub in 2012.

Investigators weren't able to determine exactly how Bobbi Kristina Brown died. An autopsy showed that she had morphine, cocaine, alcohol and prescription drugs in her body, but the medical examiner in that case couldn't determine if she killed herself, if someone else killed her or if her death was accidental.

Her family blamed Gordon, accusing him in the lawsuit of giving her a "toxic cocktail" before putting her face-down in the water. Gordon was never charged in the case, but he was found responsible in a wrongful death lawsuit. An Atlanta judge ordered him to pay \$36 million to Brown's estate.

Rolling Stones returning to North America for 15-city tour

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Rolling Stones are returning to some North American cities where they haven't played in years.

The band announced Thursday that it will kick off a 15-city leg of its No Filter tour in San Diego on May 8. Other cities where the band will play that it hasn't performed in recently include Cleveland; St. Louis; Austin, Texas; Louisville, Kentucky; Charlotte, North Carolina; Tampa, Florida; and Vancouver, British Columbia.

The band will also perform in Minneapolis; Dallas; Detroit; Pittsburgh; Nashville, Tennessee; and Buffalo, New York. The shows will end July



9 with a concert in Atlanta.

Tickets will go on sale at 10 a.m. local time on Feb. 14.

Additional details have been posted at the band's website, rollingstones.com.

This Aug. 22, 2019 file photo shows, from left, Ron Wood, Mick Jagger, Charlie Watts and Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones performing in Pasadena, Calif.

The Stones' tour through North America last year was postponed after Mick Jagger had heart surgery, but the band rescheduled those dates and returned triumphantly to the road with a show in Chicago. Another of the rescheduled shows featured the announcement that NASA had named a tiny tumbling stone spotted on the Martian surface after the band.

Prince Andrew's daughter Princess Beatrice to marry in May

LONDON (AP) —Britain is set for another royal wedding. Buckingham Palace announced Friday that Queen Elizabeth II's granddaughter Princess Beatrice will marry in London on May 29.

The palace says 31-year-old Beatrice and Edoardo Mapelli Mozzi, 37, will wed in the Chapel Royal of St. James's Palace. The chapel was the location for the

wedding of Beatrice's great-great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria to Prince Albert in 1840.

The queen will host a reception afterwards at Buckingham Palace.

Beatrice, the elder daughter of Prince Andrew and his ex-wife Sarah Ferguson, announced her engagement to real estate entre-



Beatrice

preneur Mozzi last year. He is a Briton descended from a noble Italian family.

The father of the bride quit public royal duties in November amid an outcry over his friendship with the convicted U.S. sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, who died in August.

Actor-comedian Orson Bean, 91, hit and killed by car in LA

LOS ANGELES

(AP)—Orson Bean, the witty actor and comedian who enlivened the game show "To Tell the Truth" and played a crotchety merchant on "Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman," was hit and killed by a car in Los Angeles, authorities said. He was 91.

The Los Angeles County



Bean

coroner's office confirmed Bean's Friday night death, saying it was being investigated as a "traffic-related" fatality. The coroner's office provided the location where Bean was found, which matched reports from police.

A man was crossing the

road outside of a crosswalk in the Venice neighborhood when he was clipped by a vehicle and fell, Los Angeles Police Department Officer Drake Madison said. A second driver then struck him in what police say was the fatal collision. Both drivers remained on the scene, neither was impaired and Bean's death was being treated as an accident, Madison said.

Father refuses to meet his gay son's boyfriend

DEAR ABBY: Our son "Greg" has come out as gay. My husband can't accept it and refuses to meet Greg's boyfriend. Our other son is getting married (to a girl), and Greg will be bringing his boyfriend. My husband says he won't come to the wedding because our son's boyfriend will be there. He says it would "make a mockery" of the wedding. He has not told them yet.

I have tried everything I can to convince my husband to come. I told him this will destroy our family and marriage. He said he doesn't care! I told him this has nothing to do with the wedding. He will embarrass both sides of the family. He finally admitted he just doesn't want to see Greg's boyfriend. I told him he doesn't have to talk to him, but no argument works. I know our children will never speak to him again. I cannot stay married to him if he does this. I have no idea what to do.

SUPPORTIVE MOM IN NEW YORK

DEAR MOM: Tell your husband, as calmly as possible, that the wedding isn't the only milestone in his sons' lives he will miss unless he has an attitude adjustment. Skipping the wedding will be just the beginning of his isolation because he will be absent from other important family milestones—celebrations, christenings, birthdays, sporting events, recitals and graduations. If that doesn't wake him up, nothing will. However, if he still cannot relent, whether you should end your marriage isn't something you should decide on

impulse or out of anger. A licensed marriage and family therapist should be consulted.

DEAR ABBY: My sister, who is estranged from our siblings, has been diagnosed with cancer. The more-than-three-year estrangement wasn't her choice, and she was devastated by it. She has requested that they be kept ignorant about her medical condition. We are all (six of us) in our 60s, and I don't know how much time any of us has left. I would hate for my siblings to regret not having time with her, or to disown me for keeping this secret. Do I betray her trust and tell them?

SIBLING DILEMMA IN NEVADA

DEAR SIBLING DILEMMA: Do not betray your sister's trust and reveal her diagnosis to the siblings who ostracized her. The news is hers and hers alone to convey. You are assuming they would rush to her side to support her, which isn't necessarily true. This could be detrimental to her recovery, so do not risk it.

DEAR ABBY: My daughter expects that her children always receive a "gift" from their four grandparents on Valentine's Day. My wife and I are OK with this, yet WE receive no cards, gifts or phone calls from the grandchildren or our children. Are we old-fashioned, or is my daughter's expectation inappropriate?

OLD-FASHIONED

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



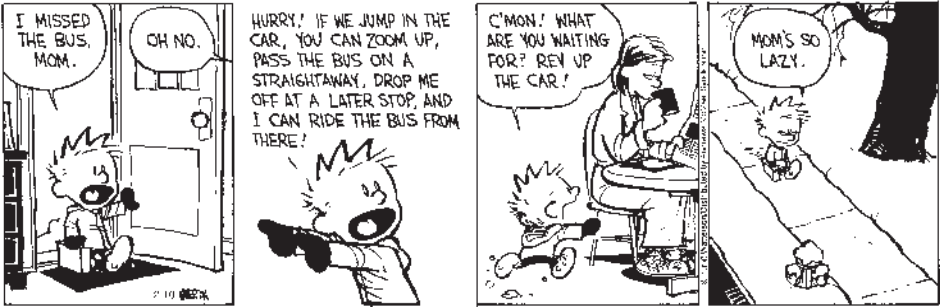
DEAR OLD-FASHIONED: Your daughter's expectations are inappropriate. They are also nerdy. Your daughter should be teaching her children that exchanging holiday greetings is a reciprocal endeavor. If your daughter doesn't want to buy Valentine cards for her children to give to you, the kids should MAKE them for Grandma and Grandpa. (They would make precious keepsakes, framed individually or as a collage.)

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

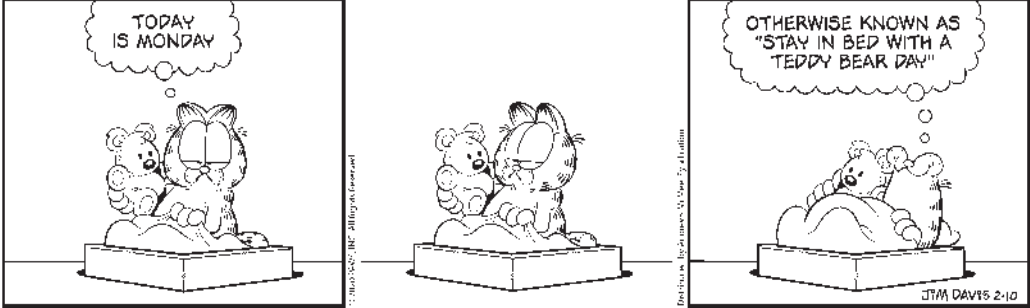
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Top card

4 Salon jobs

9 High tennis shot

12 Doctrine

13 Planet's path

14 Epoch

15 Suggested retail cost

17 Mal de —

18 Ecol. watchdog

19 Start the computer again

21 "Swan Lake," e.g.

24 North African port

25 Metal source

26 Chips go-with

28 Terrific

31 Gymnast Korbut

33 "Evita" narrator

35 Marathon fraction

36 Plank

38 Business mag

DOWN

1 Be sick

2 Hit CBS series

3 Ambulance letters

4 Burst

5 Mercurial

6 Hitter's stat

7 Itty-bitty

8 Takes the helm

9 Tangy desserts

10 Twistable cookie

11 Homer's son

16 — Aviv

20 "The Wizard of Oz" author

21 Nitwit

22 Singer Guthrie

23 Attorney's tablets

27 Greek consonant

29 First lady of scat

30 Tara of "Sharknado"

32 Bailiwick

34 Augment

37 Texas city

39 Provided at no cost

42 Handed out hands

44 New Deal agcy.

45 Big-screen format

46 Con-structed

50 Golfer Michelle

51 Gun the engine

52 Spigot

53 Decade parts (Abbr.)

Solution time: 26 mins.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

12 13 14

15 16 17

18 19 20

21 22 23 24

25 26 27 28 29 30

31 32 33 34 35

36 37 38 39 40

41 42 43 44

45 46 47

48 49 50 51 52 53

54 55 56

57 58 59

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Chloe Grace Moretz, 23; Emma Roberts, 29; Elizabeth Banks, 46; Laura Dern, 53.

Happy Birthday: Get ready to think and act responsibly. Make this a busy year filled with ideas and plans that will help you get closer to your goal. Don't waste time debating or spending impulsively. Calculate every step you take to maximize your chance to achieve what you set out to do. Don't make promises you cannot honor. Your numbers are 7, 15, 23, 26, 32, 37, 43.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Take stock of how you go about maintaining mental, physical and emotional wellness. Improve your health and well-being. Avoid discussions that could lead to discord. Participate in something you feel passionate about achieving. A personal situation will confuse you. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Discuss sensitive issues. Deal with people you work with, and pick up information and skills that will help you advance. The more you improve your image, qualifications and relationship with your contemporaries, the better. Make positive changes. *****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Do what's best for yourself, not what someone is pushing you to do. The best way to get what you want is to do the work yourself. A love relationship will improve if you are attentive. **

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You have more options than you realize. Don't settle; look for something better. You may not like change, but a different approach to life

will stimulate your mind, imagination and desire to make personal improvements. Take better care of your health. ****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Be realistic about what you can. Leading someone on who is counting on you will end up being costly. Personal gains are within reach if you are aggressively active in pursuing your goals. Romance is in the stars. *****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Look for the less obvious, and you will understand what's possible. Leave nothing to the imagination. Add as much detail as possible to everything you do, including updating your appearance and your attitude. Build greater confidence in yourself and what you have to offer. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Strive to reach your goal and to help those who have something to offer in return, but don't take on the impossible. Someone will take advantage of you and your generosity if you are too accommodating. Accentuate love and romance. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Explore lifestyles and pastimes. A tweak here and there to the way you've been living will help you appreciate what you have already accomplished. An offer is heading your way. Be diligent, and take whatever comes to you seriously. ****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): A change may summon you, but before you take off or sign up for something, tie up loose ends. Red-tape issues can hold you hostage if not handled quickly. Put a deal together or close a chapter in your life. **

EUGENIA LAST THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Avoid getting duped by a fast-talking individual trying to part you with your hard-earned cash. Being generous doesn't mean you have to pay for others; you can be generous with your time, affection and services. Make a difference. *****



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Plan every move you take, and pay close attention to detail. Leave nothing to chance, and you will get what you want. Helping others is honorable, but don't let anyone take advantage of you emotionally or financially. ***



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Someone will have a hidden agenda. Whether dealing with a colleague, friend or family, look for ulterior motives. Make changes based on what will benefit you. People-pleasing will not help you get ahead. A lack of honesty and integrity is apparent. ***



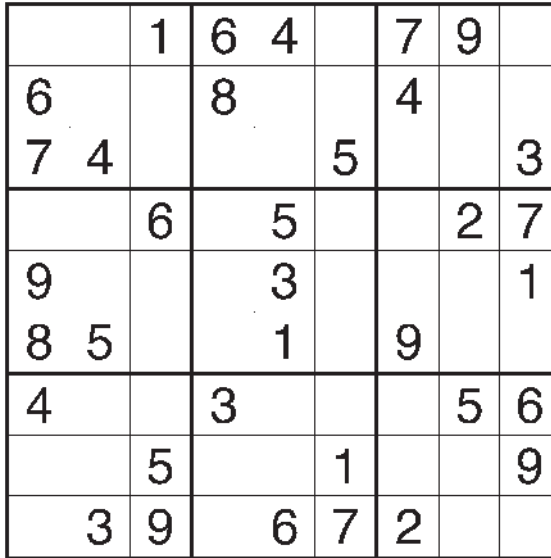
Birthday Baby: You are diligent, a humanitarian and resourceful. You are practical and intense.

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SUDOKU

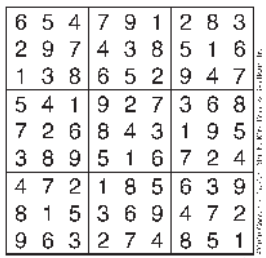
Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer



Difficulty Level ★ 2/10 ©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

THE ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

Solution: 11 letters

Y T I C T R E E S H T R A E E
G S R A C H H T N O C E A N C
O E W S E L B A T E G E V E O
L L I A T L A M B W E I V R L
O Y L D O E L I W I R R E G O
N T D L R V A L I O T C G Y G
H S L R P A N C N B Y A I O I
C E I O C R C M D C E T T A C
E F F W A T E R L F C P S A C A
T I E L A N D E A F U E L A L
C L C A T M O S P H E R E R A
A I T N O I T A L U P O P B B
P L A N E T T H G I L F I O O
M N A E L C I T E N I K Y N L
I E S U E R U T A N E D R A G

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Atmosphere, Balance, Bike, Carbon, Cars, City, Clean, Climate, Earth, Ecological, Energy, Environment, Flight, Forest, Fuel, Garden, Global, Green, Habitat, Health, Impact, Kinetic, Land, Lifestyle, Nature, Ocean, Planet, Population, Protect, Recycle, Reuse, Safe, Technology, Travel, Trees, Vegetables, View, Water, Wildlife, Wind, World
Last Friday's Answer: Language
To purchase WONDERWORD books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

STUMPED?

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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT NO. 20-01
United States District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands

Information Technology Security Officer
Permanent, Full-Time Position - Location: SAIPAN, NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS (CNMI)
Starting grade: CL-27 Step 1 \$57,670, to CL-28 Step 25 \$86,403, depending on qualifications.
(Advanced starting grade above CL-28 Step 25 may be available with exceptional qualifications.)
Opening Date: February 3, 2020 • Applications received by February 21, 2020 will be given priority.

Position Overview:
The Information Technology Security Officer (ITSO) develops Information Technology security policy to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of systems, networks, and data; protected from unauthorized intrusion. The ITSO is responsible for implementing local policies that comply with national IT security standards. At the advanced (CL-28) level the ITSO develops high-level documentation and presentations of security policy, and serves as a team lead to fulfill security objectives. This position reports to the Information Services Manager. Complete position description is available upon request, or via Internet at <http://www.nmid.uscourts.gov>. This position includes full federal employment benefits, with paid leave and holidays, health insurance, life insurance and federal retirement benefits.

Minimum Qualifications and Preferred Qualifications:
High School graduate with two years of specialized experience in a field closely related to these duties, or a bachelor's degree with honors or distinguishment, or completion of one or more years graduate study in a field closely related to the subject matter of this position; and holder of CompTIA "A+" or equivalent certification. Additional preference will be given for college graduation, advanced work experience directly in this field, and for holders of CompTIA "Network+", "Security+", "CASP+" or equivalent certifications in the fields of network management and IT security. Applicants should demonstrate sound ethics and judgment, and have superior communication skills.

Citizenship Requirement:
Applicants are required to be U.S. citizens or aliens who are authorized to work in the U.S.

Notice to Applicants:
Excepted service appointments are "at will" and may be terminated by either the court or the employee at any time for any reason. Selectees are subject to a background investigation and suitability determination, and updated background investigations every five years. Employees are subject to the Judicial Code of Conduct. Direct deposit of pay is required.

Application Procedure:
Each applicant is required to submit a Cover Letter, Resume, and an AO-78 application form. AO-78 forms are on the Internet at: <http://www.nmid.uscourts.gov> or may be picked up at the U.S. District Court. Position is open until filled; applications received by February 21, 2020 will be given priority.

Deliver signed applications to:
Clerk of Court
United States District Court
for the Northern Mariana Islands
2nd Floor Horiguchi Bldg, Garapan, Saipan

Or, email signed applications to:
HR@nmid.uscourts.gov

The United States District Court is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

WHATZIT Solution: Leftovers

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Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.



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Illustrated by Andrew McNeil Syrd cation

Find today's solution in classified section

Marlins' Mattingly bothered by sign-stealing, Jeter vote



MIAMI (AP) — Baseball's news cycle

of late has been dominated by the sign-stealing scandal that led to upheaval in Houston and Boston, as well as Derek Jeter missing out on being a unanimous selection for Baseball's Hall of Fame.

Don Mattingly was bothered by both stories.

Miami's manager spoke out Saturday at the team's annual FanFest, expressing dismay over how Jeter — the Marlins' CEO — was one vote away from appearing on 100% of the ballots submitted in this year's Hall of Fame voting, as well as the sign-stealing controversy that is could well taint Houston's World Series win in 2017 and Boston's title in 2018.

"You could see it kind of coming, honestly, with the technology, with the cameras, just how fast that has come to the forefront with everything you can do with replay," Mattingly said. "You could actually see how it could ... how something could start to happen. Unfortunately, it did."

Houston manager AJ Hinch and general manager Jeff Luhnow were suspended for a year by MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred after he found illicit use of electronics to steal signs during the Astros' run to the 2017 World Series title and again in the 2018 season. Team owner Jim Crane then



Derek Jeter CEO and part owner of the Miami Marlins leaves a meeting during MLB baseball owners meetings, Thursday, Feb. 6, 2020, in Orlando, Fla.

fired both Hinch and Luhnow. Manager Alex Cora left the Red Sox last month after Manfred's report identified

him as the ringleader of the sign-stealing scheme when he was the bench coach for the Astros in 2017.

The Astros were also fined \$5 million and must forfeit their next two first- and second-round amateur draft

picks. MLB's investigation into Boston continues.

MLB officials said the Astros used the video feed from a

center field camera to see and decode the opposing catcher's signs. Players banged on a trash can to signal to batters what was coming, believing it would improve the batter's chances of getting a hit.

"We're all within this industry, so we don't want to see it tarnished or tainted in any way," Mattingly said. "I think the commissioner's office did a great job of like bringing everything to the forefront. Now the ramifications have come out. Hopefully it's something that we've moved forward from."

Mattingly didn't pause when asked if he was disappointed that Jeter — who appeared on 396 of the 397 returned ballots by vote-holding members of the Baseball Writers Association of America for enshrinement into the game's Hall of Fame — was not the game's second unanimous selection, after fellow longtime New York Yankees star Mariano Rivera.

"Honestly, yes," Mattingly said. "You know, like you said, it doesn't matter. From my viewpoint, it doesn't really matter. But I'm thinking to myself, I don't know how you could look at anything in his career and say it's not Hall of Fame. So I'll leave it at that."

Mattingly heads to spring training in the next few days in Jupiter, Florida, with high expectations even though the Marlins are coming off another dismal year.

Spring training: time for pitchers, catchers and cheaters

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Baseball returns to the field next week when pitchers, catchers and cheaters report to spring training.

Fans await the annual sunny scenes of favorites stretching on bright green grass in Florida and Arizona.

This year the players bring along dark clouds of scandal — the 2017 World Series champion Houston Astros have been tainted by their sign-stealing scam and the 2018 champion Boston Red Sox have been accused of similar subversion.

Teams hope once workouts start, the stain will fade.

"I think those stories lines will weave in and out, but that spring training is that juncture for individual fan bases to be optimistic about what the season ahead holds and it shifts back to that," Toronto Blue Jays President Mark Shapiro said. "There's a natural kind of rhythm to spring training that diverts to the positive stories."

But first, confessions?

Some regard baseball's blemish from sign stealing as

vivid as the acne on the backs of steroids-swelled sluggers of the 1990s and early 2000s.

None of the current members of the Astros has publicly expressed contrition for breaking prohibitions against using a video camera to swipe signs from opposing catchers in 2017 and 2018. Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred said spring training might be the appropriate time for a group mea culpa because fessing up individually during the offseason "could be sort of a treacherous road to go down."

Former Astros pitcher Mike Fiers, now with Oakland, sparked the scandal in November when he went public in an interview with The Athletic. He took down 10% of major league managers and became for some an MVP — Most Virtuous Player.

Houston manager AJ Hinch and general manager Jeff Luhnow were suspended for the season by Major League Baseball on Jan. 13, and the pair were fired by the Astros later that day. Manfred's conclusions led to the departures

of Boston manager Alex Cora, the Astros' bench coach in 2017, and new New York Mets manager Carlos Beltrán, Houston's senior player during the title run.

A third of the teams changed managers, including the Mets twice. Milwaukee's Craig Counsell, hired in May 2015, already is the National League's senior skipper. New faces include Dusty Baker (Astros), Joe Girardi (Phillies), Gabe Kapler (Giants), Joe Maddon (Angels), Mike Matheny (Royals), Luis Rojas (Mets), David Ross (Cubs), Derek Shelton (Pirates) and Jayce Tingler (Padres), with the Red Sox yet to announce Cora's successor.

Baker, at 70 the oldest big league manager, is tasked with keeping the Astros on track to become the first team to win 100 or more games in four straight seasons. He also will try to steady a core branded as villains by players and fans in other cities.

"You got to go forward and make sure that it doesn't happen again," Baker said. "It certainly is not going to hap-

pen on my watch here, and I don't foresee it happening ever again because this has been an embarrassment for a lot of people."

Cora's punishment was delayed by Manfred pending MLB's investigation into the Red Sox, which could conclude next week. Boston's turmoil extended to the trade market, with a deal that would send former MVP Mookie Betts and former Cy Young Award winner David Price to the Los Angeles Dodgers as part of a three-team trade involving Minnesota. The delay in the deal being finalized prompted criticism from the players' association, still smarting over the grievance loss of Chicago Cubs third baseman Kris Bryant, who unsuccessfully claimed the team violated the labor contract by delaying his big league debut until the day his free-agent eligibility would be delayed a year.

Bryant's trade value increased with arbitrator Mark Irving's decision, because acquiring teams can be certain he cannot go free for two more

seasons. The cost of top free agents was never more vivid than this offseason.

Players who switched teams included pitcher Gerrit Cole (\$324 million from the Yankees), third baseman Anthony Rendon (\$245 million from the Angels), right-hander Zack Wheeler (\$118 million from the Phillies), third baseman Josh Donaldson (\$92 million from the Twins) and left-hander Madison Bumgarner (\$85 million from the Diamondbacks).

Right-hander Stephen Strasburg became a free agent shortly after winning the World Series MVP award, then stayed with the Nationals for \$245 million.

On the December day he signed with the Yankees, Cole thanked pioneering player Curt Flood, former union head Marvin Miller and others who fought to gain free agency and then to preserve it.

"It's so important that players know the other sacrifices that players made in order to keep the integrity of the game where it is," Cole said.

All those big bucks and pre-Christmas deals contrasted with the slow markets of the

prior two offseasons. Spending followed MLB's fourth straight attendance drop, to 68.5 million, down from 73.8 million in 2015.

"It's a more competitive environment. More teams are trying to win," New York Mets general manager Brodie Van Wagenen said.

Washington will raise the championship flag for the first time in franchise history and will try to become the first repeat winner since the Yankees from 1998-2000. The previous longest stretch was between the 1977-78 Yankees and the 1992-93 Blue Jays.

Houston will go for its third AL pennant in four seasons, and the Yankees will try to reach the Series for the first time since 2009 — following their first decade since the 1910s without a World Series appearance.

"We can all look each other in the eyes and know, when it counts, we can all count on each other," Nationals ace Max Scherzer said, "and we're a bunch of winners."

Champions always believe that. But it hasn't worked out for anyone them in two decades.

Taylor takes 1-shot lead over Mickelson at Pebble Beach



PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. (AP)—For his final act on a day filled

with short-game magic, Phil Mickelson hit a full-swing flop shot over a bunker that landed in just the right spot on the 18th green at Pebble Beach that it rolled out to 4 feet from the cup.

Somehow, it didn't go in.

For a time Saturday in the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am, it seemed everything did.

"It seemed like my short game was pretty good today," Mickelson said after a 5-under 67, that final birdie leaving him one shot behind Nick Taylor of Canada as Lefty goes for a record sixth title at Pebble.

Taylor had a cold start and a relatively quiet day at Spyglass Hill, away from all the hits and giggles around the celebrity rotation at Pebble Beach. He overcame two early bogeys with a 25-foot eagle putt on his 16th hole for a 69, and his first 54-hole lead on the PGA Tour. Taylor was at 17-under 198.

Mickelson and his sublime short game delivered more entertainment than all the athletes and celebrities combined during the Saturday show at Pebble.

He made the impossible look easy from a bunker behind the par-3 seventh green at Pebble Beach. He holed out from a bunker for birdie on the 13th and chipped in from 90 feet for birdie on the next hole.

In his post-round interview with CBS, he suggested hitting only nine greens wasn't all that bad because he kept missing in the right place that left him a good angle, the exception being the par-3 12th where he made his lone bogey. And then he abruptly ended the discourse.

"Actually, that's not true," Mickelson said. "I had some pretty good up-and-downs."



Phil Mickelson is greeted by Steve Young after chipping the ball into the 14th hole of the Pebble Beach Golf Links for a birdie during the third round of the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am golf tournament Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020, in Pebble Beach, Calif.

Topping the list was No. 7, the 110-yard hole down the hill toward the Pacific, the most picturesque hole at Pebble. It looked like a terror for Mickelson when his sand wedge went long and plugged into the back bunker.

"I was just trying to not make 5," Mickelson said. "I was trying to get on the green and just make a 4, give myself a putt at a par. But it came out great."

It splashed out of the sand so perfectly that it took a few hops in the rough be-

fore reaching the green, losing enough pace to trickle 2 feet away for a tap-in par. Even for Mickelson, it rates among his best.

"Yeah, it's No. 2 in my all-time greatest bunker shots," Mickelson said. "I made one in the final round at Memorial, Muirfield Village, the old 16th hole from under the lip, plugged, and I holed that one. This one didn't go in, but it was the second-best I've ever hit."

Taylor's best was a 3-wood onto the green at the par-5

seventh that led to eagle and assured he would have the lead. His only PGA Tour victory was just over five years ago at the Sanderson Farms Championship, his fourth start of his rookie season. He will be in the final group, his first time playing with Mickelson.

"It's going to be a new experience for that reason, if I am playing with him," Taylor said. "Obviously, if he makes a putt or great shot, the crowd's going to go wild. I've just got to do my own

thing, try to block all that out. Easier said than done, without having to do it before, but I'll do the best I can."

This is a two-man show; however, Jason Day posted a 70 at Spyglass Hill and was only three shots behind at 14-under 201.

For others, it was a wasted opportunity.

Pebble Beach had more wind than earlier in the week, but still gentle enough that low scores were available. Dustin Johnson, a two-time winner at Pebble, was

in striking range and could manage only a 72, leaving him eight shots back. Patrick Cantlay, at No. 8 in the world, played the final six holes in 2 over for a 72 and was nine shots back.

Mickelson started with a pair of birdies. He took a share of the lead with a birdie on the par-5 sixth.

And then the fun began.

After his par save at No. 7, his long bunker shot from short of the eighth green rolled inches from the cup.

More trouble supposedly awaited on the 13th when his approach peeled into the left bunker. He raised both arms when that dropped for birdie. And on the par-5 14th, he made a mistake by not hitting his punch wedge hard enough. It came down the slope, off the green and back into the fairway. Mickelson's long chip from 90 feet banged into the pin and dropped for birdie.

"It was a really good day in saving shots and hitting shots," Mickelson said, "but I'm usually OK with a wedge."

Next up is a Sunday with plenty at stake for the leading three players.

Mickelson said earlier in the week he would not accept a special exemption for the U.S. Open if he needed one. A victory at Pebble — the 45th of his career — would go a long way toward solving that, moving him to around No. 40.

Taylor can validate his first win since his rookie season, an opposite-field event at the time. The Canadian has never been to the Masters and has played in only four majors, two as an amateur.

Day, meanwhile, is a former No. 1 who spent most of last year injured and frustrated. He has gone nearly two years since his last win, and was in danger of falling out of the top 50 if he didn't start getting better results.

Hee Young Park wins women's Victoria Open



MELBOURNE, Australia

(AP)—Korea's Hee Young Park, who came close to quitting golf last year, made par on the fourth hole of a three-way playoff Sunday to win the LPGA Tour's Victoria Open from compatriots Hye-Jin Choi and So Yeon Ryu.

On a course swept by a boisterous wind and as evening closed in Park, Choi and Ryu returned repeatedly to the tee on the dog-leg par-5 18th to play out a gripping finale after finishing tied at 281, 8-under par.

Former world No. 1 Ryu dropped out on the second playoff hole when she missed a birdie putt but Park and Choi continued until luck and nature intervened.

Choi's tee shot on the fourth playoff hole came to rest against a pine cone in light rough left of the fairway, leaving her with no choice but to chip out. Her attempt to do so came up short, she put her next into a hazard, dropped out, and finally reached the fringe of the green in six.

Park had an eagle putt to win the tournament on the first playoff hole but saw it slide

by the cup. She faced three more holes in tough conditions before clinching her third LPGA title.

"Last year was the worst year in my life and I had to go to q-school and I was going to stop golf because I thought (there was) no more game in my mind," Park said. "Then I made q-school and I had a chance to play another year this year."

"I never stopped and I think God gave to me this present."

The tournament at the 13th Beach Golf Links also feature a European Tour men's tournament running alongside the women's event.

After Saturday's third round, the men's and women's fields were reduced to 35 players each plus ties. The final round was played on the Beach course which was one of two courses used in the first two rounds along with the Creek course.

Australia's Min Woo Lee held his nerve on a day of high winds and high drama to win his first professional title in the same tournament his sister Minjee Lee won as an amateur in 2014 and again as a professional in 2018.

Minjee Lee, who finished in a tie for sixth in the women's event, was beside the 18th green when Min Woo tapped

in a birdie putt to win the title by two shots from New Zealander Ryan Fox.

Lee, 21, began the final round three shots clear of three-time European Tour winner Marcus Fraser and fellow Australian Travis Smyth. But his main challenge came unexpectedly from Fox who carded an 8-under 64 in his final round to move to 17 under for the tournament and to place pressure on the lead.

Lee led by two shots at 19 under coming to the 17th but bogeyed and reached his final hole with only a one shot lead over Fox.

He didn't falter. He found the fairway, then the green to

leave himself a 12 foot birdie putt which ended just inches wide of the hole and tapped in for a win which has been long anticipated.

"I just played awesome and I'm proud of myself," Lee said after embracing his sister.

"I was walking off 14 and I heard a roar and I was guessing (Fox) or someone in that group had made eagle or birdie. I just counted up and figured he could have eagled 16 or birdied 17 and eagled 18."

He was right. Fox birdied 16 and eagled 18 to complete his charge up the leaderboard.

Fraser shared third with Robin Sciort-Siegrist of France who shot 68 to finish 14-under.

Giannis just misses triple-double, Bucks beat Magic

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—A slow start didn't help Giannis Antetokounmpo's shot at NBA history, but the Milwaukee Bucks are hardly a one-man show.

Khris Middleton hit a 3-pointer less than 20 seconds into the game, and the team with the league's best record never trailed Saturday night in a 111-95 victory over the Orlando Magic. It's the 13th time the Bucks have led from wire to wire this season.

"It's nice to not trail ... but it doesn't really mean anything. We have to keep playing good basketball," Antetokounmpo said.

"We were up 27 and they came back, cut the lead to 11. So it doesn't mean anything," the league's reigning MVP added. "We just try to take it quarter by quarter."

Antetokounmpo nearly had a triple-double with 18 points, 18 rebounds and nine assists while also falling short of becoming the first player in league history with at least 30 points, 15 rebounds and 5 assists in six consecutive games.

Brook Lopez led the Bucks with 23 points, including 5 for 5 on 3-point attempts. Middleton had 21 points and 13 rebounds, and Bledsoe finished with 18 points.

Nikola Vucevic led the Magic with 21 points and 14 rebounds. Terrence Ross had 20 points, Markelle Fultz scored 15 and Evan Fournier added 14 for Orlando, which continues to hold the eighth playoff position in the Eastern Conference despite losing eight of its last nine.

Timberwolves 142, Clippers 115

In Minneapolis, Jordan McLaughlin scored a career-high 24 points and Malik Beasley added 23 in his Minnesota debut, helping the Timberwolves stop a 13-game losing streak.

MIAMI (AP)—Most of the top NBA playoff contenders stayed out of the down-to-the-wire frenzy at the trade deadline.

Miami and the Los Angeles Clippers beefed up instead.

And a slew of other teams—including the Golden State Warriors—made moves with short-term finances and long-term ramifications in mind.

The NBA's 3 p.m. EST deadline Thursday for trades to be consummated did not arrive quietly, with a flurry of deals getting struck in the final hour and at least one other notable move falling apart before reaching the finish line. Deals that included at least 41 players and 15 future draft picks were struck on either Wednesday or Thursday—the biggest move likely being the one Thursday



Karl-Anthony Towns had 22 points, 13 rebounds and nine assists for the Timberwolves, who won for the first time since Jan. 9. McLaughlin added a career-high 11 assists as Minnesota scored its highest point total of the season thanks to a franchise-record 26 3-pointers.

Kawhi Leonard scored 29 points and Paul George had 21 for the Clippers, who had won three in a row.

Lakers 125, Warriors 120

In San Francisco, LeBron James had 22 points, 11 assists

and eight rebounds, leading the Lakers to the victory.

Anthony Davis collected 27 points and 10 rebounds for Los Angeles on a night when the Warriors honored Kobe Bryant, his daughter, Gianna, and the other seven helicopter crash victims during Golden State's first home game since the deadly accident Jan. 26 in Southern California.

Andrew Wiggins scored 24 points on 8-for-12 shooting in his Warriors debut after he was traded by the Minnesota Timberwolves before Thursday's deadline in exchange for

D'Angelo Russell, Jacob Evans III and Omari Spellman.

Nuggets 117, Suns 108

In Phoenix, Jamal Murray scored 36 points for Denver, and Nikola Jokic added 23.

The Nuggets completed the season sweep against the Suns, winning all four games. Denver has won five of its past six games overall.

Denver led 83-78 going into the final quarter and never trailed in the fourth, turning back a few Phoenix rallies.

Deandre Ayton had 28 points and 19 rebounds for the Suns.

^{AP} Milwaukee Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo (34) shoots over Orlando Magic guard Markelle Fultz (20) during the first half of an NBA basketball game in, Orlando, Fla., Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020.

Devin Booker added 21 points and Kelly Oubre Jr. had 20.

Pelicans 124, Pacers 117

In Indianapolis, Jrue Holiday scored 14 of his 31 points in the final 2:26, including a go-ahead 3-pointer, and the short-handed Pelicans beat the Pacers.

New Orleans played without Brandon Ingram and Zion Williamson due to injuries. Ingram has a right ankle sprain, and Williamson is dealing with a left ankle sprain.

JJ Redick added 23 points for the Pelicans.

Indiana dropped its fifth consecutive. Jeremy Lamb led the Pacers with 26 points. T.J. Warren scored 22.

Mavericks 116, Hornets 100

In Charlotte, N.C., Seth Curry scored 26 points in his return to Charlotte, and the Mavericks cruised to the victory.

Curry made his first 10 shots from the field, including six 3-pointers.

Willie Cauley-Stein added 15 points and 10 rebounds for the Mavericks, who played without Luka Doncic and Kristaps Porzingis. Doncic missed his sixth consecutive game with a right ankle sprain, while Porzingis rested a sore left knee.

Devonte Graham had 16 points and 10 assists for the struggling Hornets, who have lost 13 of their last 14 games.

Kings 122, Spurs 102

In Sacramento, Buddy Hield scored 31 points, Harrison Barnes added 25 and Sacramento earned its third consecutive victory.

Nemanja Bjelica had 15

points and six rebounds as the Kings won for the sixth time in eight games overall.

Hield became the fastest player in NBA history to reach 800 career 3-pointers, doing it in 296 games. Golden State's Stephen Curry was the previous fastest, having reached 800 in 305 games.

Dejounte Murray had 17 points, nine assists and nine rebounds for San Antonio, which has lost four consecutive and seven of nine.

Knicks 95, Pistons 92

In Detroit, Julius Randle and the New York Knicks took advantage of Andre Drummond's absence.

With the game on the line, Randle and Mitchell Robinson came up with crucial offensive rebounds, and Randle eventually made a bank shot with 13.5 seconds left that helped New York hold on for a 95-92 victory over the Detroit Pistons on Saturday night.

The Knicks have won a season-high four straight.

Raptors 119, Nets 118

In Toronto, overcoming the absence of injured stars is becoming a regular occurrence for the Toronto Raptors.

So is winning games.

Fred VanVleet scored 10 of his 29 points in the fourth quarter, Pascal Siakam scored 20 points, including the tiebreaking free throw with 22 seconds remaining, and the Raptors extended their franchise-record winning streak to 14 by beating the Brooklyn Nets 119-118 on Saturday night.

Terence Davis scored 20 points in his first home start, Matt Thomas had a career-high 15 and Serge Ibaka added 12 as the Raptors won despite playing without All-Star guard Kyle Lowry, earning their 10th consecutive home victory over the Nets. Toronto has won 18 of 19 in the series, including six straight.

Hectic end to the NBA's trade window, but some teams sat out

that saw Andrew Wiggins going from Minnesota to the Warriors so D'Angelo Russell could leave Golden State finally be paired with his good friend Karl-Anthony Towns with the Timberwolves.

Here's how busy the Timberwolves were at trade-deadline time: They announced the jersey numbers of eight new players Thursday night.

Marcus Morris leaves New York for Los Angeles, going from the woebegone Knicks to the title-hoping Clippers—who added a piece many teams wanted.

"My brother back with me. It's on," the Clippers' Patrick Beverley wrote on Twitter, one of many players express-

ing their happiness with Morris joining the West contenders.

The rest of that deal:

The Knicks got Moe Harkless, a first-round pick this year, a second-round pick next year and a first-round pick swap option in 2021 as well from the Clippers. The Clippers also sent Jerome Robinson to Washington for Isaiah Thomas—who is not staying with Los Angeles and will become a free agent option for teams shortly, the latest twist in a career that saw him as an All-Star averaging 29 points just three years ago but was derailed by injury and a long recovery.

"Thank you (at)WashWizards for giving me a opportunity to show the world I'm

healthy and I can still play at a high level," Thomas wrote on Twitter. "I appreciate my coaches, teammates & everybody from top to bottom in the organization you truly made a impact on & off the court for me"

Three-time champion Andre Iguodala is ending his exile after not playing for Memphis at all this season and is going to join the Heat along with Jae Crowder and Solomon Hill, with Miami sending three players—Justise Winslow, Dion Waiters and James Johnson—who've combined to score a mere 254 points this season out in the deal. Johnson was flipped by the Grizzlies to Minnesota for Gorgui Dieng.

"Today is a very good day

because we think the acquisition of Andre, Jae and Solomon will help us with our versatility and create a more balanced roster," Heat President Pat Riley said. "Today is also a sad day because we lose three very good players who have been part of our family. We wish Justise, James and Dion nothing but the best in the future."

NBA rebounding leader Andre Drummond got moved by Detroit to Cleveland, then took to Twitter to express his dismay with the trade process.

"If there's one thing I learned about the NBA, there's no friends or loyalty," Drummond wrote. "I've given my heart and soul to the Pistons, and to be have this happen with no heads

up makes me realize even more that this is just a business! I love you Detroit ..."

The Warriors decided to make the Russell-for-Wiggins move, giving Wiggins a fresh start that he likely needs—the former No. 1 overall pick will get to reap the benefits of playing alongside a healthy and rejuvenated Stephen Curry, Klay Thompson and Draymond Green starting next season. And by throwing in a couple extra players, the Warriors also will likely escape the luxury tax this season. That's not an insignificant point for a team that will go from five straight NBA Finals to the bottom of the Western Conference this season and, it hopes, back to title contention starting next year.

Jones fends off challenge at UFC 247 in disputed decision

HOUSTON (AP)—Jon Jones retained his title at UFC 247, beating Dominick Reyes by unanimous decision.

After the bout, opinions on the outcome were anything but unanimous.

Jones retained his light heavyweight belt Saturday night following a surprisingly strong opening by Reyes. The unanimous decision of 48-47, 48-47, 49-46 was met with scattered applause and loud boos from the crowd, as many felt the challenger had proven enough to take the title.

UFC President Dana White addressed what turned out to be a disputed decision.

"The scoring was all over the map," said White, noting that he thought Reyes had a 3-1 edge entering the final round. "My kids are terrorizing me that, 'The fix is in, how did this happen?'"

"People had it all over the place, but the reality is ... we're not judges. The judges call the fight, and that's that. As far as the judging and the reffing tonight, do I think it was perfect? I do not. We need to do some work down here."



White said UFC can work with the Texas commission to help improve the quality of judging and officiating.

"I do feel disrespected," Reyes said. "One of the judges had it 49-46. Who are you? I might want to have a word with you. I know I won that fight."

White said he believes Reyes deserves a rematch.

Jones faced his most serious challenge in years.

"I wasn't always confident that I was winning the fight," Jones said. "I was confident that I wasn't going to give up or slow down. I think I displayed the difference between a champion and an extraordinary contender. Something special happens when it's time for the champion to present

himself, and you guys saw it tonight in the fifth round."

Jones (26-1-1) handed the fourth-ranked Reyes (12-1) his first loss, improving to 14-0 in title fights. He became the all-time leader in UFC title defenses, breaking the record previously held by Georges St-Pierre.

"I don't think he was disrespected," Jones said of Reyes.

Jon Jones, left, connects a punch on Dominick Reyes, right, during a light heavyweight mixed martial arts bout at UFC 247 Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, in Houston.

"I've got to watch the fight though. It's hard to speak with confidence when I haven't watched the fight."

Jones was fighting for the first time since last July's win over Thiago Santos at UFC 239, his longest period between fights in more than five years.

Reyes came out on the attack in the first round, briefly knocking Jones to the ground less than

two minutes into the bout. Jones bounced back in the second round, landing several strong hooks to Reyes' head.

The lively crowd swayed back and forth in support of either fighter, chanting both names at different points.

In the third round, Reyes landed blows to Jones' head, and he drew blood early in the fourth round. Jones finished that round strong and the once-lively crowd became quiet and tense in anticipation of the final round.

Jones ramped up his attack in the final round, but Reyes seemed to keep enough separation from the champ to put it in the judges' hands.

Reyes, a 30-year-old from Southern California who played college football at Stony Brook, said before the fight that he expected a victory and that it would be "life-changing." Instead, he was dealt a controversial loss and said he hopes to get a rematch.

"For me, this is huge validation," Reyes said. "This was my very first time going all

five rounds, and it was against Jon Jones, arguably the greatest of all-time. And I put it on him. I mean, I really took it to him. I feel like I'm the people's champ."

In the co-main event of UFC 247, flyweight champion Valentina Shevchenko defended her title against Kaitlyn Chookagian, stopping the challenger in the third round.

The Kyrgyzstan-native Shevchenko (19-3) won her fifth bout in a row in dominant fashion over Pennsylvania-native Chookagian (13-3), who entered as the top-ranked

contender for the belt. After the fight, Shevchenko did her trademark cartwheels and dancing in the ring.

"After the last elbow in the first round when I cut her, I knew the fight was not going to last five rounds," Shevchenko said. "I was just trying to find the best way to finish."

Earlier on the pay-per-view portion of the 12-bout event at the Toyota Center, Houston-native heavyweight Derrick Lewis (23-7) beat Ilir Latifi (15-8) via unanimous decision with a surging rally late. Lewis, the No. 6-ranked heavyweight who rescued flood victims during Houston's Hurricane Harvey in 2017, played Houston hip-hop music entering and exiting the ring and had rousing support from the crowd.

Another Houston-native, heavyweight Juan Adams, had a much more bitter homecoming, getting stopped in under two minutes by New Zealand-born Australian Justin Tafa, who earned his first UFC win.

Also on the main card, featherweight Dan Ige (13-2) won his fifth straight fight, taking a split decision over Mirsad Bektic (13-3).

appearance after a dominating 6-0, 6-0 triumph against Seo-hee Lee.

In girls U12 age group, Jeong Bin Park got the better of Isa Nishitani, 6-2, 6-0, to advance. The other first round pairings between Lina Tsukagoshi and Hannah Chae and Ellie Cho and No. 2 seed Jeun Anna Kwon still has no results as of press time. Girls U12 top seed Irin Chung got a bye in the opening round.

Results of the boys U16, U14, and U12 as well as the mixed-up doubles will be published in the next few days.

The Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association is organizing the 2020 White-Coconut Classic. For more information on the 2020 White-Coconut Classic, call tournament director Jeff Race at 483-5652 or email raceaces@yahoo.com.

BLUE

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stays combined for 18 points to give their team a 31-8 edge going into the second quarter.

That 13-point lead would only grow more in the second period, as brothers Ed and Tony Diaz joined Jeff Garcia in a scoring spree that had Blue Haus enter the halftime break with a monstrous 58-31 advantage.

Masters scoring leader Edgar Pangelinan was limited to a mere 8 first half points by Blue Haus' stifling defense.

In the third, Blue Haus continued to pour it on with Peredo reviving his scoring exploits with 6 in the quarter and his team greeted the fourth and final quarter ahead, 79-48.

It would go from bad to

worse for Pangelinan and company in the payoff period. With the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library staff's guns effectively muzzled and Old Iskool's defense wanting, Blue Haus continued to frolic on offense and finished the game with the 34-point route.

Peredo led all scorers with 20 points and earned best player of the game honors. The Diaz brothers, Esdrelon, Junar Guiab, and Bruce Berlin all finished in twin digits for Blue Haus. Old Iskool dropped to 6-2 in the standings and was paced by Pangelinan's 13 markers.

In the second game, Marlon De Dios was named best player of the game after leading Vision RNV to a 95-90 nipping of Team Lakay.

Unlike the opener, the Vision RNV-Team Lakay matchup was tight through and through with clutch baskets from Esdrelon in the fourth quarter proving to be the marginal baskets in the game.

Esdrelon scored the last 8 points of Vision RNV and matched Di Dios' total with 18 points despite playing his second straight game of the evening. Peredo also played his second straight game and came away with 17 in the win, which was the fourth in eight games for Vision RNV.

Team Lakay, which lost its third game in eight tries, was led by the 23 points of Ronald Bernardo, while Meljun Capalad also reached the 20-point plateau by adding 20 of his own.

YOUNGSTERS

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selected as Tsunami Saipan representative, she could not show me any good grade time until now. But Kaya showed everyone splendidly when she almost reach the level of team representative," he said.

Veteran swimmers 17-year-old Kevin Guererro, 15-year-old Juhn Tenorio, 14-year-old Jinnosuke Suzuki, and 13-year-old Isaiah Aleksenko were also cited by Kimura for setting good examples for the younger and less experienced members of Tsunami Saipan.

"Kevin, Juhn Tenorio, Jinnosuke, and Isaiah are swimmers who have the most attendance in practice and, in fact, also never skipped morning

practice. These four swimmers also have the most stable and good results every time trial," he said.

Kimura also shared that the rationale for the time trials is to determine which swimmers are ready for off-island swimming competitions.

"For Tsunami Saipan swimmers, off-island meet is not a meet where a swimmer can go if a swimmer wants to go. Off-island meet is different from local meet. It is a meet where only those who have worked hard every practice and achieve good results can go."

At every time trial, Kimura said each swimmers' goal is to get the qualifying time. "If a swimmer has already marked the qualifying time, he or she

can aim at updating lifetime best times with their best of the best. That is why Tsunami swimmers keep practicing harder every day."

The cut-throat nature of the time trials was evident when swimmers that didn't meet the qualifying times were so disappointed that they openly cried after the time trials.

"There were countless swimmers who did not reach the qualifying time and wept at the time trials. It is the qualifying time that only a swimmer who made an effort can reach and the off-island meet that only a swimmer who has reached the qualifying time can go."

A total of 35 Tsunami Saipan swimmers took part in the time trials last month.

First Game

Blue Haus 91 – E. Peredo 20, E. Diaz 14, Esdrelon 13, T. Diaz 13, Guiab 10, Berlin 10, R. Peredo 4, Santos 4, Kulala 2.

Old Iskool 63 – Pangelinan 13, Camacho 12, De Guzman 8, Grimpula 8, Manabat 6, Abuy 5, Pablo 4, Estolas 3, Bartolo 2, Montano 2.

Scoring by quarters: 31-8, 58-31, 79-48, 97-63.

Second Game

Vision RNV 95 – De Dios 18, Esdrelon 18, Peredo 17, Rueda 16, Devero 12, Taraya 6, Agustin 4, Padulina 2.

Team Lakay 90 – Bernardo 23, Capalad 20, Alegre 11, Rono 9, Galulu 8, Cabrera 6, Solis 4, Macaraig 4, Reyes 2.

Scoring by quarters: 28-19, 48-45, 73-66, 95-90.

While Tsunami Saipan swimmers and Kimura were all too appreciative of PIC Saipan for letting them use their facilities, they still long and pine for the reopening of the Marpi swimming pool.

"I hope that we can at least use the pool as a competition venue for us to have future swim meets and represent our islands," said veteran swimmer Nelson Batallones.

"I hope the Marpi pool will open again because this pool is sort of like our second home. It is where our generation and the past generations have starting swimming, practiced, improved, and beaten high records. The Marpi pool is Tsunami Saipan's place of origin," seconded up-and-coming swimmer Julia Jinang.

RACE

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safely into the second round after beating Jinhui Jeong and Yuko Kumada, respectively.

Kim made quick work of Jeong, 6-0, 6-0, while Jambor had a slightly more difficult time disposing of Kumada 6-2, 6-3. Kim will face top seed Lydia Tan in the second round, while Jambor will square off against second seed Elizabeth Culp, also in the second round.

In the girls 14 division, Savita Sikkil will face top seed Helen Kim in the second round after defeating Seiyul Hong in the opening round, 6-1, 6-1. Kim got a free pass to the next round.

Hoo Hwang also made it out of the first round after a 6-1, 6-2 victory over Yebin Shin. No. 2 seed Serin Chung also booked a second round



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Youngsters shine in time trials

Race leads 1st week winners in Coconut Classic

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR



CNMI sports hall of famer Jeff Race advanced to the second round of the men's singles in last weekend's 2020 White-Coconut Classic at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

The 59-year-old CNMI national tennis team coach beat Vicente Tudela in the opening round, 6-2, 6-1, to join five other players who advanced to the second round.

Also winning their first round assignments were Ji Hwan Ryu, No. 3 seed Ken Song, Colin Ramsey, Malika Miyawaki, and No. 3 seed T.J. Bellama.

Top seed Robbie Schorr and second seed Jimin Woo were given byes in the first round.

Ryu defeated Steven Goodwin, 6-2, 6-4. Song blanked Eugene Park, 6-0, 6-0. Ramsey got the better of Gerald Boyer, 6-2, 6-0. Bellama beat Sean Lee, 6-1, 6-0 and Miyawaki was a 6-1, 6-1 winner over Daniel Kang.

In the women's singles, Seon Hee Kim and Sarka Jambor are

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A total of 35 Swimming Center Tsunami Saipan swimmers took part in the time trials last month held at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan lap pool.

The next generation of swimmers under Swimming Center Tsunami Saipan shone the brightest during the club's time trials held last Jan. 22 at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan's lap pool.

Tsunami Saipan head coach Hiro Kimura said the improvements showed by 7-year-old Shana Barman and 6-year-old Stella Choi in the time

trials were "wonderful."

"Shana's 50 Free was 47.23. It is already reached B grade time. Shana is still 7 years old. When she will turn 8

years old, I think she will be able to reach more than A grade level."

He was equally effused with Choi's results in the time trials last month.

"Stella's 25 Fly was 26.25. It is equivalent to B time when converted to 50 yards. Stella is still 6 years old. She is the star of expectation of Saipan swimming," he said.



The Tsunami Saipan coach also heaped praises on Kaya Braxton and said the 9-year-old is definitely "ready for launch!"

"Kaya marked B grade time for all events! Though Kaya almost is

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Blue Haus finished the elimination round of the masters division of the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League with a perfect 9-0 win-loss record after laying waste to Old Iskool, 91-63, last Thursday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Ehrol Peredo and Elmer Esdrelon led an explosive first quarter for Blue Haus, as the two open division main-

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Blue Haus swingman Ehrol Peredo was named best player of the game against Old Iskool in the masters division of the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League last Thursday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Blue Haus completes season sweep

